Race for Distinction

A Social History of Private Members' Clubs in Colonial Kenya

Dominique Connan

Thesis submitted for assessment with a view to
obtaining the degree of Doctor of History and Civilization
of the European University Institute

Florence, 09 December 2015

European University Institute
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Examining Board

Prof. Stephen Smith (EUI Supervisor)
Prof. Laura Lee Downs, EUI
Prof. Romain Bertrand, Sciences Po
Prof. Daniel Branch, Warwick University

Race for Distinction. A Social History of Private Members' Clubs in Colonial Kenya

This thesis explores the institutional legacy of colonialism through the history of private members clubs in Kenya. In this colony, clubs developed as institutions which were crucial in assimilating Europeans to a race-based, ruling community. Funded and managed by a settler elite of British aristocrats and officers, clubs institutionalized European unity. This was fostered by the rivalry of Asian migrants, whose claims for respectability and equal rights accelerated settlers' cohesion along both political and cultural lines. Thanks to a very bureaucratic apparatus, clubs smoothed European class differences; they fostered a peculiar style of sociability, unique to the colonial context. Clubs were seen by Europeans as institutions which epitomized the virtues of British civilization against native customs. In the mid-1940s, a group of European liberals thought that opening a multi-racial club in Nairobi would expose educated Africans to the refinements of such sociability. The United Kenya Club only highlighted the strength of racial prejudice. It gave rise to much discomfort and awkwardness among its members, which reflected the contrast between European will to promote moderate, educated Africans and the brutality by which Kenya's most radical nationalists were crushed during the Mau Mau War. If Africans eventually took interest in joining European clubs, it was because these institutions had become entwined with state power. Settlers and officials met in clubs to discuss politics, within an Empire of which decorum, epitomized during official visits, almost recognized European clubs as official buildings. Africans eventually became members, torn between a nationalist rejection of the colonial past and the will to join institutions that conferred prestige and afforded connections. They abandoned Gilbert & Sullivan operas, yet they took over golf. On Kenya's fairways, white domination was challenged by black triumphs, while African elites appropriated clubs as an attribute of class, and no longer race, distinction.

Acknowledgements

Researching and writing this dissertation has been a long journey. It started as a broad examination of historical and contemporary elite sociability in Kenya, which eventually became two doctoral dissertations, one in Politics which I undertook in Paris and the present one. My first thoughts go to Prof. Stephen Smith; turning political sociology into history is never a smooth ride, and I wish to express my warm gratitude for his patience and encouragements.

This work was only made possible thanks to the generosity of several institutions. Most of the research was funded by a fellowship from the French Ministry of Research and Higher Education, granted through the European University Institute. Additional travel and fieldwork grants were provided by the French Institute for Research in Africa in Nairobi, the Maison Francaise in Oxford and the Centre de Recherches Politiques de la Sorbonne in Paris.

The research for this dissertation took place in Kenya and the United Kingdom, and in both countries I am indebted to the many individuals and institutions who made it possible. The staff at the Kenya National Archives deserves particular thanks; it has been extremely friendly and helpful. I think especially of Richard Ambani, and to his ability to find files which were presumed lost. At Rhodes House in Oxford, Lucy McCann was very supportive and helpful in obtaining access to some private collections, and in mailing to France photocopies of the manuscripts I needed.

In Africa and Europe, several scholars have supported and generously accepted to comment on my work. David Anderson, Jean-François Bayart, Romain Bertrand, Hélène Charton, Fred Cooper, Jean-Hervé Jézéquel, Benjamin Kipkorir, Godfrey Muriuki, Chris Musambayi Katumanga, Julius Simiyu Nabende, Kenneth Ombongi, Kiran Patel, Christopher Prior, Antonella Romano, Berny Sèbe, Vincent Simiyu, Justin Willis; John Lonsdale was supportive from the beginning, and extremely generous to provide his contacts in Nairobi. At la Sorbonne, the conceptual insights provided by Johanna Simeant, my politics supervisor, were invaluable.

Besides the pleasures and torments of fieldwork in Kenya, I am indebted to Claire, Flemmo and Tony to have welcomed me in Ngara as one of them, and to Sue and Rose for their Kiswahili lessons and translations. Finally, far from academia, my parents and my sister have been a constant support to my endeavours over the years.

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  CAP CAS 127, Kenya Branch

  CAP CAS 131, Capricorn Newsletters

- ICOMM: Library of the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, London

  ICOMM PP.KE.CAS 3-7, Capricorn Africa Society Files

- KNA : Kenya National Archives, Nairobi

  Private Manuscripts:

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  KNA MSS 3/189, Kenya Colleges of Citizenship

  KNA MSS 4/272, Muthaiga Country Club

  KNA MSS 111/7, S.V. Cooke papers, 1944-66

  KNA MSS 128/30, Koru Farmers Association

  KNA MSS 128/32, Gilgil Country Club

  KNA MSS 128/39-40, Koru Club

  KNA MSS 128/41 Songhor Club

  KNA MSS 129/18 Capricorn Africa Society

  Government:

  KNA (MAA), Ministry of African Affairs

  KNA AB, Ministry of Community Development

  KNA ADM, Administration

  KNA CS, Chief Secretary

  KNA DAO KBU, Agricultural Officer, Kiambu

  KNA DC KSM, District Commissioner, Kisumu

  KNA DC KMG, District Commissioner, Kakamega

KNA DC MUR, District Commissioner Murang'a

KNA DC KAPT, District Commissioner, Nandi

KNA DC NKU, District Commissioner, Nakuru

KNA DC UG, District Commissioner, Uasin Gishu

KNA GH, Governor's House

KNA MV, District Commissioner, Kitui

KNA PC NKU, Provincial Commissioner, Nakuru

KNA PC NGONG, Provincial Commissioner, Ngong

KNA PC NZA, Provincial Commissioner, Nyanza

KNA RZ, Ministry of Home Affairs

- Public Records Office, Kew

  PRO CO, Colonial Office

- RCMS : Royal Commonwealth Society Library, Cambridge

  RCMS 178/1/21-33 Papers of Arnold Paice

- RHO : Rhodes House Library for Commonwealth and African Studies, Oxford (now moved to Weston Library)

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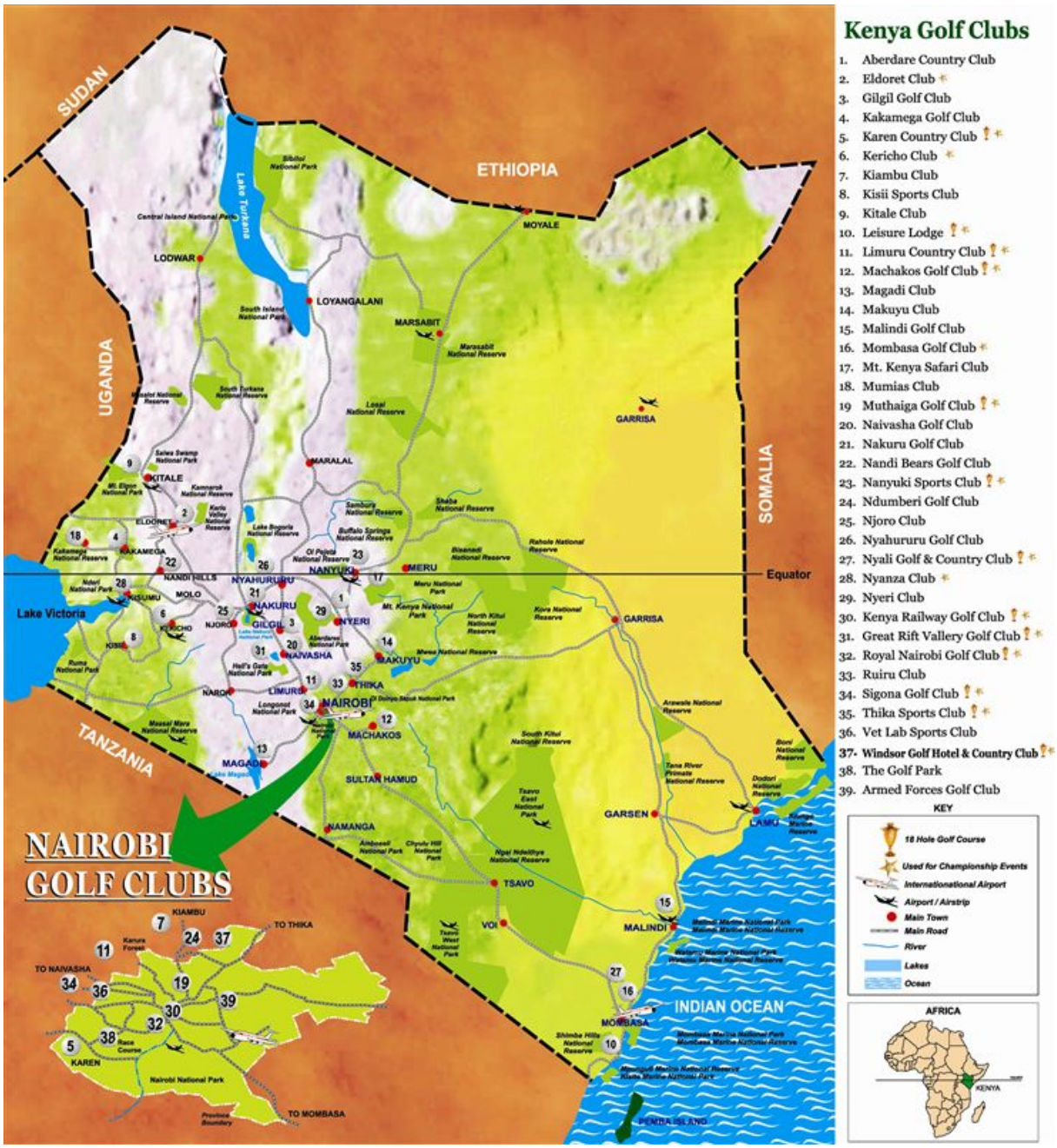
Map of Kenya

Map No. 4187 Rev. 1 UNITED NATIONS
January 2004

Department of Peacekeeping Operations
Cartographic Section

A Map of Kenyan Clubs



Contents

Introduction

> The members of a comprador bourgeoisie of a former settler colony count themselves lucky. They don't have to travel and reside abroad to know and copy the culture of the imperialist bourgeoisie: have they not learnt it all from the colonial settler representatives of metropolitan culture? Nurtured in the womb of the old colonial system, they have matured to their full compradorial heights, looking to the local Europeans as the alpha and omega of gentlemanly refinement and lady-like elegance. With racial barriers to class mobility thrown open, the deportment of a European gentleman, – rosebuds and pins in coat lapels, spotless white kerchiefs in breast pockets, tail-coats, top hats and gold-chained pocket watches- is no longer in the realm of dreams and wishes. […] The settler played golf and polo, went to horse-races or on the royal hunt in red-coats and riding-breeches… The black pupils do the same, only with greater zeal: golf and horses have become "national" institutions.[1]

A harsh critic of Kenya's post-colonial establishment, author Ngugi Wa Thiong'o wrote these words in detention. One of his plays had been judged too offensive by the Moi regime; the book he wrote in jail was even more so. Beyond his typical verve, Ngugi captured one of the most striking peculiarities of the elites of independent Kenya: the apparent mimicry of former settlers' verbal, sporting and clothing practices, which usually pertain to the realm of British gentility. A key institution for the reproduction of these cultural attributes is the club, of which more than fifty, founded under British rule, have survived in contemporary Kenya. A club can be defined as an exclusive, institutionalized form of sociability, usually owning its own premises. Clubs appeared in 17th century Britain, were exported to all colonies of the Empire, and were perpetuated beyond. In most parts of the Empire, clubs were racially exclusive; from the 1980s in Kenya they had become the preserve of an African elite This raises several intertwined issues. They pertain to the colonial legacy; cultural diffusion and hegemony; domination and the making of elite culture.

I aim to understand how an institution like the club, so peculiar to settlers' sociability, carried on after their departure to become an attribute of African respectability. In the process, the colonial legacy and the conditions of its continuation are placed into question. As regards to this, it will be helpful to take a brief account of clubs' history in Britain and beyond. In late 17th century Britain, economic expansion led to a major growth of the tertiary sector and to the development of the professions -lawyers, clergy and medical men; all fuelled urban migration. These new social categories needed mutual support,

1. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, *Detained. A Writer's Prison Diary* (Nairobi, Kampala, Dar es Salaam: East African Educational Publishers, 1981), 57.

as well as institutions to assess the trustworthiness of their peers. Coffee and drinking houses first became the centre of male sociability, and fostered some sense of solidarity among urban newcomers, through rituals as such as drinking, feasting, singing and the organization of Church processions. The rituals became more and more formal, with bureaucratic rules of admission and management. The term coffee houses waned, while the word club tended to designate this more bureaucratic institution.[2]

During the 19th century, the growth of the City and the professions rendered clubs more exclusive.[3] Progressively structured as monopolies, the professions used the club system as a right of entry, almost the equivalent of a licence.[4] Historiographies of British clubs have underlined the links between the growth of these new classes and the rise of voluntary associations. Therefore clubs became, alongside a great variety of official purposes –artistic, literary, theatrical, political or military– collective enterprises of respectability. They valued both professional achievement and a traditional etiquette, inherited from aristocratic standards, all celebrating individual self-mastery.[5] The "gentleman" consequently became a figure in which the rising segments of the British middle classes understood self-achievement. Nonetheless, in the absence of any formal definition, gentle-manhood could only be recognized by peers, and club membership was a sure way to assess such status. By the end of the 19th century, there were more than 200 clubs in London, among which the Travellers, the Union Club and the Athenaeum were all founded between 1819 and 1824.[6][7][8]

By the 19th century, clubs had also become an imperial institution. In America, clubs first developed along the British pattern, driven in the cities by the White Anglo Saxon Protestant (herinafter, WASP) elites.[9] Their growth accompanied a wider set of self-segregating practices and residential strategies, to form "island communities", among

2. Peter Clark, *British Clubs and Societies, 1580-1800: The Origins of an Associational World* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), 163,178-179, 206-209; Marie Mulvey Roberts, "Pleasures Engendered by Gender: Homosociality and the Club," in *Pleasure in the Eighteenth Century*, by Roy Porter and Marie Mulvey Roberts (New York: New York University Press, 1996), 59; Robert J. Morris, "Clubs, Societies and Associations," in *The Cambridge Social History of Britain, 1750-1950. Social Agencies and Institutions*, ed. F. M. L. Thompson, vol. 3 (Cambridge University Press, 1990), 395–443; Robert J. Morris, "Voluntary Societies and British Urban Elites,1780-1850: An Analysis," *The Historical Journal* 26, no. 1 (1983): 95–118.

3. Antonia Taddei, "London Clubs in the Late Nineteenth Century" (University of Oxford Discussion Papers in Economic and Social History, 1999), 24.

4. Taddei, "London Clubs in the Late Nineteenth Century," 24-25; A process well-described by sociologist Frank Parkin as "social enclosure"; Frank Parkin, *Marxism and Class Theory. A Bourgeois Critique* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1979), 44-73.

5. Catherine Hall, "The Economy of Intellectual Prestige: Thomas Carlyle, John Stuart Mill, and the Case of Governor Eyre," *Cultural Critique*, no. 12 (Spring 1989): 168-173; ; Morris, "Voluntary Societies and British Urban Elites,1780-1850: An Analysis"; and: Morris, "Clubs, Societies and Associations."

6. Clark, *British Clubs and Societies, 1580-1800: The Origins of an Associational World*, 475.

7. Anthony Lejeune, *The Gentlemen's Clubs of London* (London: Parkgate Books, 1979), 15.

8. Taddei, "London Clubs in the Late Nineteenth Century," 5.

9. James M. Mayo, *The American Country Club. Its Origins and Development* (New Brunswick, New Jersey and London: Rutgers University Press, 1998), 8-34.

which numbered summer resorts and wilderness camps.[10] The aftermath of the Civil War, especially, saw WASP elites adopting a conservative stance as regards to development of capitalism, urbanization and centralization. They perceived them as threats to Victorian culture and values, and to the protestant ethics of hard work and self-denial.[11] New wealth and immigrants fostered their self-segregating practices, while they left the city centres and moved to the suburbs. The appearance of the country club reflected this move. It was a conservative, anti-modernist institution, erected to moderate the effects of social change, and to regenerate WASP solidarity in new environments.[12] Country clubs, then, functioned as a conservatory of Victorian values. They revived gentility through Anglo-mania, while clubs imitated, in practice and architecture, the lifestyle of the British upper classes. Clubs were suffused with pastoral nostalgia and the desire to escape the plight of industrial and modern life.[13] Golf developed in such context, and soon became associated with these newly formed country clubs.[14] Country clubs burgeoned in the suburbs of New England and California, and counted more than a thousand by 1900.[15] Although their rules were rarely explicit, these clubs were exclusively white institutions and, by the turn of the century, most became openly anti-Semitic, refusing to offer membership to Jews.[16] American clubs were, as compared to their British equivalents, far more conservative and racially segregative. For different reasons, similar trends were observed in the British colonies. It is unclear, however, how far the American experience of country clubs consciously mirrored the situation in the British colonies. The reverse is more documented, since architects imported the country club, as a racially segregative, suburban sporting institution, in London and in the colonies.

Clubs so developed in British colonies from the mid-19th century. The Bengal Club, founded in 1827 during the Company rule, was the oldest in India.[17] India clubs were, as in Britain, an urban phenomenon. They clearly marked British identity; and as in England were deeply influenced by military culture.[18] Although the European population of India

10. Mayo, *The American Country Club. Its Origins and Development*, 35-42.

11. Richard J. Moss, *Golf and The American Country Club* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 12.

12. Ibid., 46.

13. Ibid., 19.

14. Moss, *Golf and The American Country Club*, 29; Firstly formalized at St Andrews in Scotland in 1754, golf was adopted by settlers from Virginia at the end of the 18th century, before appearing in India through the Scottish diaspora: first in Calcutta in 1829, then in Bombay where a club was formed in 1842, and in Australia, in England, New-Zealand, Canada, Ireland, and Hong Kong from the 1860s Pierre Singaravélou and Julien Sorez, "Pour une histoire transnationale du sport. Circulations des pratiques sportives en situations impériales," in *L'Empire des sports. Une histoire de la mondialisation culturelle*, ed. Pierre Singaravélou and Julien Sorez (Paris: Belin, 2010), 25.

15. Moss, *Golf and The American Country Club*, 43.

16. Mayo, *The American Country Club. Its Origins and Development*, 44.

17. Although this is contested, Ashis Nandy reporting that the first English Cricket Club was the Calcutta Club, formed as early as 1792, albeit in a very informal way: Ashis Nandy, "The Tao of Cricket. On Game of Destiny and Destiny of Games," in *A Very Popular Exile*, by Ashis Nandi (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2007), 52.

18. As A. Taddei notes, in 1870 an until the turn of the century, almost a third of London clubs were

was predominantly male until the end of the 19th century, clubs opened membership to women, allegedly to protect them from the influence and advances of Asian men.[19] Sports, and in particular cricket and polo, which were played from the mid-18th century, and preceded the appearance of dedicated voluntary associations, were central to India's clubland.[20]. Cricket was played by both Europeans and Indians, in around more than thirty clubs.[21] Communities played against each other. A first match between Parsis and Europeans gave way to the development of the Triangular, later Pentagular Tournament, contested between Parsis, Hindus, Europeans, Muslims, and "the rest". While cricket and clubs apparently helped to reduce social distinctions within a given community, they crystallized animosity against others.[22] The expansion of the Empire to India had a direct consequence on London's clubland. It reshaped the standards of British gentility. The many military clubs reflected the prestige of those involved in conquests overseas: the Army and Navy, the Cavalry Club, the Naval and Military.[23] The clubs promoted the colonial adventure to the East as an honourable achievement.[24].

In the imperial expansion of clubs, Africa was no exception. The oldest on the continent was probably the Civil Service Club, founded in Johannesburg in 1858. Again clubs developed around a wide variety of purposes: In Cape Town the Owl Club, for instance, was a dinner club, mainly formed by a group of Freemasons, meeting once a month for a musical evening, more rarely for a speech or a lesson. Members had to be qualified in science or the arts to be elected, and the club kept close relationships with the Savage Club in London, which proceeded along similar lines.[25] However, besides intellectual achievement, clubs further encouraged the development of the character through physical exercise. This moral program, undertaken by public schools and universities, took more importance than intellectual achievements in the socialization of British middle classes.[26] Sports became a unifying force of the imperial elites; as "a culturalbond of a white imperial fraternity. Within imperial sport racism, sexism and imperialism were as valid a

military clubs Taddei, "London Clubs in the Late Ninetenth Century," 10-11.

19. Mrinalini Sinha, "Britishness, Clubbability, and the Colonial Public Sphere: The Genealogy of an Imperial Institution in Colonial India," *Journal of British Studies* 40, no. 3 (2001): 503.

20. On the Asian origins of polo, see in particular: H. E. Chehabi and Allen Guttmann, "From Iran to All of Asia: The Origins and Diffusion of Polo," in *Sport in Asian Society: Past and Present*, ed. Fan Hong and James Anthony Mangan (London: Frank Cass, 2005), 309–321; et : Peter Parkes, "Indigenous Polo in Northern Pakistan: Game and Power on the Periphery," in *Subaltern Sports: Politics and Sports in South Asia*, ed. James A. Mills (London: Anthem Press, 2005), 61–82.

21. Ramachandra Guha, "Cricket and Politics in Colonial India," *Past and Present*, no. 161 (1998): 158-159.

22. Ibid., 189.

23. Lejeune, *The Gentlemen's Clubs of London*, 26&90&160.

24. Ibid., 175.

25. Eric Rosenthal, *The Third Tuesday. A History of the Owl Club, 1951-1981* (Cape Town: The Owl Club, 1982).

26. James Anthony Mangan, *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School* (Oxford: Routledge, 2000).

trinity as athleticim, militarism and imperialism".[27] Through sports and for Europeans, the Empire was an emotional experience and a moralistic conduct, which fuelled an "ethnocentric sense of a superior English masculinity".[28] The formation of Victorian standards of masculinity was closely intertwined with imperial developments. In London, the Shikar Club, founded by a handful of public-schoolboys to celebrate big game hunting, was an iconic avatar of this male, Victorian sociability.[29]. Among its members were Lord Egerton and Lord Delamere, two future Kenya settlers.

There are several historical works on clubs in the Western world, but only a few on their imperial manifestations. Among these, Paul J.Rich has emphasized the relationship between the rituals of public school culture and the development of imperial institutions such as clubs and the Freemasons.[30] According to his "causal" approach, the British public school system and culture, which he calls "ritualism" was the matrix from which the Empire originated during the Victorian era.[31] The link between public schools and imperial elite formation is rather evident, yet Rich sets it out as a reified system, in which all public schools were the same, and all clubs were similar throughout the Empire, the latter being only an institution where the traditions and rituals of the former were perpetuated among Britons overseas.

In a study on clubs in Meiji-era Kobe, Darren L. Swanson uses a similar paradigm to describe expatriate social life in a late 19$^{\text{th}}$ century Japanese port.[32] Here, clubs formed an imperial network where "gentlemen capitalists", as a new global elite, shared similar cultural practices and a common lifestyle.[33] Imperial clubs merely reflected and reproduced British metropolitan hierarchies, barely distorted by the country or colony in which they

27. James Anthony Mangan, "Prologue: Britain's Chief Spiritual Export: Imperial Sport as Moral Metaphor, Political Symbol and CulturalBond," in *The Cultural Bond: Sport, Empire, Society*, by J. A. Mangan (London: Frank Cass, 1992), 1–10.

28. James Anthony Mangan and Callum McKenzie, "The Other Side of the Coin. Victorian Masculinity, Field Sports and English Elite Education," in *A Sport-Loving Society. Victorian and Edwardian Middle-Class England at Play*, ed. James Anthony Mangan (Oxford: Routledge, 2006), 54.

29. James Anthony Mangan and Callum McKenzie, "Imperial Masculinity Institutionalized. The Shikar Club," *The International Journal for the History of Sports* 25, no. 9 (2008); Callum McKenzie, "The British Big-Game Hunting Tradition, Masculinity and Fraternalism with Particular Reference to the Shikar Club," *The Sports Historian* 20, no. 1 (2000): 70–96.

30. Paul J. Rich, *Chains of Empire: English Public Schools, Masonic Cabalism, Historical Causality, and Imperial Clubdom* (London and New York: Regency Press, 1991).

31. For a detailed critical account of Rich's work, see among other reviews: James Anthony Mangan, "Review : Chains of Empire: English Public Schools, Masonic Cabalism, Historical Causality, and Imperial Clubdom by P.J. Rich," *History of Education Quarterly* 34, no. 1 (1994): 91–93; and, for a more balanced comment Clive Griggs, "The Influence of British Public Schools on British Imperialism," *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 15, no. 1 (1994): 129–136.

32. Darren L. Swanson, "Gentlemanly Capitalism and the Club. Expatriate Social Networks in Meiji Kobe," *Electronic Journal of Contemporary Japanese Studies* 12, no. 1 (2012), `http://www.japanesestudies.org.uk/ejcjs/vol12/iss1/swanson.html`.

33. On the concept and rise of "Gentlemen Capitalists"' as a transnational, financial elite, distinct from the landed gentry, which served the interests of the fast-developing London Stock Exchange overseas, see: Peter J. Cain and Anthony G. Hopkins, "Gentlemanly Capitalism and British Expansion Overseas II: New Imperialism," *Economic History Review* 40, no. 1 (1987): 1–26.

were established. Such metropolis-periphery binary analysis, however, fails to recognize the local contexts by which institutions were shaped.

In a stimulating work on clubs in colonial India, Mrinalini Sinha, borrowing from Jurgen Habermas, claims that clubs were institutions peculiar to the Empire, forming what she terms a "colonial public sphere" mediating between metropolitan and indigenous publics.[34] According to her, clubs bore the contradictions of colonialism: they institutionalized the paradoxical tension between the universalism of civilization and the segregation of racial co-optation, between integration to impassable standards and exclusion on colour grounds.[35] Sinha thus describes colonial clubs as "Eurocentric": they marked the colonizer alone as "clubbable", but recognized the possibility for the colonized to progress and reach such status, given the superior character and thus universality of British social and cultural traditions.

Sinha's account of India's clubs, however, can not be applied easily to Kenya. First, the colony recognized three racial groups, Europeans, Asians and Africans, and the latter were long thought to be too backward to be socialized to British cultural standards. In Kenya's White Highlands, the settlers did not care much about the civilizing mission. If they were guided in their presence and action by standards and ideals of Western origins, these had more to do with medieval serfdom than with the modern virtues of the Enlightenment. This provocative point is indeed less true, as we will see, from the mid-1940s in Nairobi, when a set of "liberal" Europeans founded Kenya's first multiracial club. Second, and more important, while colonial studies have often been biased by deshistoricized discursive analysis, Sinha's observations are permeated by abstract, reified social categories.[36] She describes India's clubland as homogeneous, as is her definition of whiteness and European standards. This does not work for Kenya, where Europeans were often divided: settlers and officials, urban and rural Europeans. Later, conservative and liberals promoted different definitions of whiteness and civilization, as did their clubs. Sinha omits an explanation of how competing definitions of whiteness could be institutionalized through different clubs; and how such whiteness was engineered and produced, through

34. Sinha, "Britishness, Clubbability, and the Colonial Public Sphere: The Genealogy of an Imperial Institution in Colonial India."

35. On this contradiction see for instance: Uday S. Mehta, "Liberal Strategies of Exclusion," in *Tensions of Empire. Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, by Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1997), 59–86; on the French colonies of Western Africa, see also Alice Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize. The Republican Idea of Empire in France and West Africa. 1895-1939* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997).

36. A bias often attributed to literary works, and inherited from Said's however seminal Orientalism; or even to what Cooper terms "identitarian sociology". For Kenya, see for instance: Carolyn Martin Shaw, *Colonial Inscriptions. Race, Sex and Class in Kenya* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995); A bias also observed in "psychological" approaches in colonial studies, inheriting from Franz Fanon. For a typical example on gender and domesticity, see: Ashis Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self Under Colonialism* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1983); For a criticism, see Frederick Cooper, *Colonialism in Question. Theory, Knowledge, History* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2005), 98-99.

for, instance, rules and regulations.

As a whole, previous analysis of colonial clubs has failed to explain how they changed over time. As an institution, a practice of sociability and despite the fact that it has always kept its appellation, the club has experienced many transformations. An emanation of British gentility and imperial expansion, these were by no means their essence. From London's 17th century clubland to colonial clubs, and from the latter to contemporary establishments, there is no obvious continuity, save their denomination and a few organizing principles. Clubs carried a practical and institutional legacy, but their meaning has always shifted according to the contexts in which they developed. Their British origins might not tell us so much about their colonial pattern, nor the latter reveal why they have mattered to Africans. If, eventually, African elites have adopted a set of "invented traditions" imported from Europe, how these traditions have been moulded by colonial and post-colonial contexts remains to be explained.[37]

A second question raised by colonial clubs pertains to the diffusion of European cultural patterns, in contexts foreign to their origins.[38] The most common interpretation of the spread of English sports overseas is that it was a direct consequence of British imperial hegemony. It is true that in British public schools, sport was thought as an essential cultural attribute to learn for the future elites of the Empire.[39] However, it is more dubious to argue that sports were a reflection of British economic and political domination. According to Mangan and Stoddart for instance, the "cultural power" of sport would have contributed to the generation of shared attitudes and beliefs between the colonizers and the colonized, while preserving enough social distance to rule the latter.[40] However, if true these assertions were only valid in the minds of colonial administrators. For instance when after the Second World War in Kenya, community development officers tried to socialize Africans through the agency of athletic competitions. Yet cricket, polo, golf or hunting have never been part of these initiatives. If sports were part of a civilizing project, sports across the board and all manner of playing sports were not equally concerned. Moreover, the intentionality of this diffusion, as part of a conscious project of legitimation of the colonial authority, has been rightly criticized by several authors.[41]

37. On African "invented" ruling traditions as importations of European origin see: Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, "The Invention of Tradition," chap. The Invention of Tradition in Colonial Africa (Cambridge University Press, 1983), 261.

38. Norbert Elias already asked a similar question, while he wondered how sports could meet popular success in countries foreign to their initial cultural context. Norbert Elias, "Sport et violence," in "Le sport, l'État et la violence," *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 2 (2-6 1976): 20.

39. Mangan, *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School.*

40. Brian Stoddart, "Sport, Cultural Imperialism, and Colonial Response in the British Empire," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 30, no. 4 (October 1988): 652; See also James Anthony Mangan, *The Games Ethic and Imperialism: Aspects of the Diffusion of an Ideal* (London: Frank Cass, 1986), who analyses sports as useful instruments of the colonial enterprise. And : Mangan, "Prologue: Britain's Chief Spiritual Export: Imperial Sport as Moral Metaphor, Political Symbol and CulturalBond."

41. Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large. Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis, Londres: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 114-135; Allen Guttmann, "La Diffusion des sports: un impérialisme

Whatever the settlers' or officials' intentions, the hegemony of the colonial state deserves to be put into question. In Kenya as elsewhere, colonial states were weak, under-administrated and under-staffed, and their policies were permeated with inconsistency, doubt, and indecisiveness.[42] Their rule was "arterial", centralized and spotty.[43] To think therefore that the diffusion of sports was articulated by a clear, well-defined cultural policy whose aim was to convince the natives of the validity of colonial domination is to ascribe grand projects to administrations that could hardly have handled them. In Kenya, sports' civilizing mission, as we will see, was never undertaken by more than a small minority of liberal, unorthodox officials. If most Europeans seem to have been convinced that sports reflected civilizational excellence, it is less sure than Africans shared such belief. State hegemony in colonial situations was at first a matter of "transactions", of uncertain and changing negotiations, of operative misunderstandings that only sustained colonial domination for a very short period, in Kenya less than a human life.[44] White culture was never hegemonic in Kenya, in a sense that would "induces exactly such a state of mind in which the established structures of authority and modes of exploitation appear to be in the very course of nature".[45] Eventually, the perceptions that African leaders had of the legitimacy of the colonial state seem to have been more comparable to legalism, or constitutionalism, than to a blissful admiration of polo or monarchic decorum.[46]

Moreover, across empires, cultural appropriation has been a selective process and sports have largely been adapted and transformed by the native populations.[47] Several

culturel ?," in *L'Empire des sports. Une histoire de la mondialisation culturelle* (Paris: Belin, 2010), 17; Singaravélou and Sorez, "Pour une histoire transnationale du sport. Circulations des pratiques sportives en situations impériales," 32 & 37.

42. Bruce Berman, *Control & Crisis in Colonial Kenya. The Dialectic of Domination* (Nairobi, London and Athens (OH): East African Educational Publishers, James Currey / Ohio University press, 1990).

43. Cooper, *Colonialism in Question. Theory, Knowledge, History*, 49; It is likely that Cooper uses the word arterial in reply to J. Comaroff, who argues that colonial domination was "capillary", permeating all realms of life : John Comaroff, "Governmentality, Materiality, Legality, Modernity. On the Colonial State in Africa," in *African Modernities*, ed. Jan-Georg Deutsch, Peter Probst, and Heike Schmidt (Portsmouth, Oxford: Heinemann, James Currey, 2002), 114.

44. This idea borrows from the (Gramscian) idea of hegemonic imperial transactions as developped by: Jean-François Bayart and Romain Bertrand, "Avant-propos," in *Legs colonial et gouvernance contemporaine*, ed. Richard Banégas et al., 2 vols. (2006), 3–12, `http://www.fasopo.org/publications/legscolonial2_avpro_1206.pdf`; Jean-François Bayart, "Les chemins de traverse de l'hégémonie coloniale en Afrique de l'Ouest francophone : anciens esclaves, anciens combattants, nouveaux musulmans," in *Legs colonial et gouvernance contemporaine*, ed. Richard Banégas et al., 2 vols. (Paris: Fonds d'Analyse des Sociétés Politiques, 2006), 252–305, `http://www.fasopo.org/publications/legscolonial2_jfb_1206.pdf`; Romain Bertrand, "Les sciences sociales et le "moment colonial" : de la problématique de la domination coloniale à celle de l'hégémonie impériale" (Questions de Recherche, N°18 — Juin 2006, 2006), `http://www.sciencespo.fr/ceri/sites/sciencespo.fr.ceri/files/qdr18.pdf`.

45. E.P. Thompson, *Customs in Common* (Londres, New York: Penguin Books, 1993 [1991]), 43.

46. I refer here to J. Lonsdale's criticism of D. Cannadine's book: John Lonsdale, "Ornamental Constitutionalism in Africa: Kenyatta and the Two Queens," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 34, no. 1 (2006): 87–103; David Cannadine, *Ornamentalism. How the British Saw Their Empire* (London: Allen Lane, 2001).

47. Singaravélou and Sorez, "Pour une histoire transnationale du sport. Circulations des pratiques sportives en situations impériales," 21-22.

works explain this uneven domestication by the adequacies and inadequacies between the ethical and formal properties of games and native cultures.[48] This would explain, for instance, that an aversion to physical contact, due to the caste system, had led Indians to prefer cricket and avoid rugby. However, if the compatibility of cricket with castes has been crucial in its adoption by the Indians, it does not explain its spectacular success nor its spread throughout the Commonwealth. Moreover, the case cannot be applied generally without difficulty. There are few cultures that are so rigid that they do not allow the practice of a sport. This also underestimates the remarkable plasticity of sporting practices.[49] Appadurai has shown what the success of cricket in India can be traced to the intertwining of British and Indian social hierarchies in the colonial state, to the subvention of cricket after Independence and to its marketing and broadcasting, articulated with national passions that makes it a nationalist, antagonistic sport. These factors have replaced the Victorian values that were associated with cricket, chiefly discipline, loyalty, and fair-play. Most interesting in Appadurai's analysis is the question of how far imported cultural practices can be shaped and permeated by the new context in which they take place. This inquiry applies to clubs as well. We might ask what in these social institutions has remained so British that Ngugi thinks their African members today are the *compradore* servants of their European masters, perpetuating the colonial domination by delegation.

A last question raised by the diffusion of clubs in colonial and post-colonial Kenya pertains to the production of social categories of domination and distinction. These categories, such as sex, race or class, are not only inter-sectional, meaning that groups are at the intersection of several categories, but also con-substantial as they cannot be sequenced, and co-extensive as they are mutually produced and reproduced.[50] It is somewhat illusory to isolate one of these categories as especially prominent in the reproduction of imperial formations.[51] As regards to colonial domination, recent scholarship has emphasized that

48. Apart from the works of S. Darbon quoted above, this is also the point developed by A.Nandy regarding cricket in India Nandy, "The Tao of Cricket. On Game of Destiny and Destiny of Games," 1; also quoted in Arjun Appadurai, *Après le colonialisme. Les conséquences culturelles de la globalisation*, trans. Françoise Bouillot and Hélène Frappat (Paris: Payot, 2005 [1996]), 144; Sébastien Darbon, *Diffusion des sports et impérialisme anglo-saxon: De l'histoire événementielle à l'anthropologie* (Paris: Les Editions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 2008), 338-339.

49. Although Appadurai states that cricket is a "hard" cultural practice, which moulds players more than the reverse, J. Alter has brought an excellent counter example: Appadurai, *Après le colonialisme. Les conséquences culturelles de la globalisation*, 144; Joseph S. Alter, "India Clubs and Colonialism: Hindu Masculinity and Muscular Christianity," *Comparative Studies in History and Society* 46, no. 3 (2004): 497–534.

50. For a theoretical review of these issues, borrowing from Kimberle Crenshaw and Danièle Kergoat see: Elsa Dorlin, "Introduction: Vers une epistémologie des résistances," in *Sexe, Race, Classe, pour une épistémologie de la domination*, ed. Elsa Dorlin (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2009), 5–18; Danièle Kergoat, "Dynamiques et consubstantialité des rapports sociaux," in *Sexe, race, classe. Pour une épistémologie de la domination*, by Elsa Dorlin (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2009).

51. Hence the vain nature of assesments such as David Cannadine's on the pre–eminence of class over race as the main structuring agent of the British Empire Cannadine, *Ornamentalism. How the British Saw Their Empire*, 9-10; For a different methodological frame see: Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler, "Between Metropole and Colony. Rethinking a Research Agenda," in *Tensions of Empire. Colonial*

the colonizers and the colonized were not self-evident categories, but were produced by a changing "grammar of difference", which reshaped them as European domination was imposed, challenged and contested, making the colony not a mere reproduction of the metropolis social hierarchies, but a unique cultural configuration.[52] Ann-Laura Stoler has argued that rather than being united, Europeans in colonial situations were divided, at least in class and gender. Racial borders were consciously fashioned, and they disciplined the less privileged in order to overcome the economic and social disparities that might have separated and set their members in conflict.[53] Europeans sought to avoid divisions and repress white marginality. Administrations and institutions showed a constant concern for the intimate, while a whole bureaucracy was devoted to avoiding miscegenation, deporting poor whites and fostering racial discipline.[54] The legitimacy of white domination was produced thanks to an intertwining of rationalized rule and bourgeois standards of respectability; all of which disciplined Europeans to exclusive behaviours, gender roles and matrimonial practices. These in turn which maintained white prestige.

Although her approach is extremely fruitful, Stoler's construal of sexuality and the intimate as a state obsession, a matter of policies and administrative regulations engineered by colonial elites, can be questioned.[55] The history of colonial Kenya suggests a few caveats. First, in Kenya, racial hierarchies did not only proceed from laws and state administration. Indeed, public authorities established official categories, which restricted the movements of African persons, limited their incomes, and assigned zones of residency. However, the implementation of racial hierarchies largely depended upon a more informal, diffuse apparatus. The *colour bar* which excluded Africans and Asians from European hotels, restaurants and clubs was an unofficial rule, first introduced by the Kenya Hotel Keepers Association, and never backed by a real legislation. The White Highlands, whose status as a European preserve was long uncertain, was only guaranteed by statement from the successive secretaries of state and a settler-dominated Highland Board which was only instituted in 1939, controlling all land transactions in the region.[56] The Kenya administration was too weak to contradict settlers' pretensions and too sensitive to Asian

Cultures in a Bourgeois World (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1997), 24-29; We use here the term "imperial formation" in contrast to the centre-periphery model which long prevailed in colonial studies, neglecting that metropole and colonies were mutually constituted, in complex regimes of partial and varying levels of sovereignty. On this concept see: Ann Laura Stoler and Carole McGranahan, "Introduction: Refiguring Imperial Terrains," in *Imperial Formations*, ed. Carole McGranahan, Ann Laura Stoler, and Peter Perdue (Santa Fe: School for Advanced Research Press, 2007), 15-17.

52. Cooper and Stoler, "Between Metropole and Colony. Rethinking a Research Agenda," 3-4; Ann Laura Stoler, "Rethinking Colonial Categories: European Communities and the Boundaries of Rule," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 31, no. 1 (1989): 134–161; reproduced in Ann Laura Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power. Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002), 22-40.

53. Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power. Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule*, 24-25.

54. Ibid., 92.

55. See for instance, among many occurences ibid., 75-78.

56. See: Berman, *Control & Crisis in Colonial Kenya. The Dialectic of Domination*, 142.

interests to support discrimination by legal regulations. Yet in Kenya racial borders were tight and evidence suggests that transgressions were marginal. This supports the idea that the history of domination in the colonial context must be substantiated by other sources than those produced by the state and its administrations.

Several studies have investigated non-state colonial artefacts and institutions that were fundamental to racial distinction and reproduction. Europeans were probably aware of the flimsiness of their domination. They had a sense of their own vulnerability and a diffuse fear of "going native". Such fears generated peculiar practices pertaining to clothing, architecture and medicine.[57] Hill stations during the British Raj were oasis of metropolitan culture, established to counter the risk of miscegenation and preserve racial purity.[58] So were colonial spas and hydrotherapy, whose development was backed by a strong, objectifying medical discourse.[59] These cultural practices have often been read as if Europeans consciously sought to create the artificial conditions of their preservation and reproduction in environments they found to be hostile. That is, it is thought that they developed some oasis of metropolitan culture in order to ward off miscegenation and to preserve the racial purity on which lay their privileges. This was probably true of the many spas, sanatoriums or hill stations in most colonial Empires, in Dà Lat, Antsirabe or Ootacamund. Their existence owed much to a medical discourse that naturalized the necessity to create the "nurseries of the ruling race" so crucial to European's welfare.[60] However, things were slightly different in Kenya, where the medical discourse on eugenics never preoccupied settlers and officials.[61] In inter-war Kenya, the Society for the Study of Race Improvement only counted 60 members at a time when there were 17 000 European settlers.[62] Therefore, while the study of clubs can be instructive with regard to the formation of colonial domination, they can not be understood the way spas and hill stations are, as purposively racist institutions.

Clubs were first and foremost a leisure facility, a place of relaxation which organized

57. On clothes and other protective artefacts: Dane K. Kennedy, *Islands of the White. Settlers Society in Kenya and Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1939* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1987); and Bernard S. Cohn, *Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge* (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1996), 106-121.

58. Dane K. Kennedy, *The Magic Mountains: Hill Stations and the British Raj* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996), `http://publishing.cdlib.org/ucpressebooks/view?docId=ft396nb1sf&brand=ucpress`.

59. Eric T. Jennings, *Curing the Colonizers. Hydrotherapy, Climatology and the French Colonial Spas* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2006).

60. Jennings, *Curing the Colonizers. Hydrotherapy, Climatology and the French Colonial Spas*; Kennedy, *Islands of the White. Settlers Society in Kenya and Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1939*.

61. Will Jackson recently showed that for Kenya the medical authorities lacked the disciplinary power they might have had in other contexts Will Jackson, "Bad Blood: Poverty, Psychopathy and the Politics of Transgression in Kenya Colony, 1939-1959," *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 39, no. 1 (2011): 73–94; and Will Jackson, *Madness and Marginality: The Lives of Kenya's White Insane* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013).

62. Chloe Campbell, *Race and Empire: Eugenics in Colonial Kenya* (Manchester University Press, 2007).

theatre performances, sporting events and elaborate parties. The many committee minutes were more preoccupied with accountancy. These showed a daily concern for the state of the sports fields, dealt with purchases of alcohol and lawn mowers and the organization of Christmas trees or raffles. Their suggestion books, where members recorded their grievances to the committees, demonstrated a concern for service and catering, the cleanliness of the premises, the upkeep of sports fields and the adequacy of opening hours. Europeans did not clothe themselves, nor they build with the intention to segregate and dominate always in mind. Their distinctive habits did not need strategies, reasons or schemes to actually segregate. Clubs were perceived as a haven, a safe place to relax and entertain.[63] Clubs' constitutions explicitly stipulated that they addressed Europeans only, yet their archives do not suggest that this was a permanent, prominent concern. Provisions and committee minutes never openly mentioned prestige or distinction. Most accounts of these institutions have failed to properly describe their trivial, leisure dimension, interpreting clubs in a very instrumental, utilitarian way.[64]

The main difficulty that arises while studying social institutions in colonial contexts stems from the importance to describe their trivial, mundane, everyday dimension. Bearing in mind the relations between clubs and colonial hierarchies, it is always tempting to consider clubs' social effects as intentional, to write about their policies as if they were strategies and to describe these institutions accordingly, as establishments consciously elaborated in order to generate and foster racial distinctions. If they contributed to the making of a white identity, this was through the agency of games and drinks; it is difficult to imagine, then, that playing golf and drinking whisky were deliberately considered as strategies of racial segregation. Thus it is critical to show how these leisure practices naturalized racial distinction, as an embodied attitude, a set of tastes and distastes, whose effects did not need to be conscious nor explicit to be effective. Distinctive practices can do without intent and purpose.[65] Distinction is all the more effective when naturalized, and it is when its reasons are voiced and enunciated that it ceases to be believed in.[66] It is

63. In Kenya as elsewhere. I refer here to Orwell's irony when describing Burma settlers taking refuge in their club during a native riot, George Orwell, *Burmese Days* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1934).

64. Cyril Sofer and Rhona Ross, "Some Characteristics of an East African European Population," *The British Journal of Sociology* 2, no. 4 (December 1951): 322-323; Kennedy, *Islands of the White. Settlers Society in Kenya and Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1939*, 179-180; John Lonsdale, "Which Man's Country ?," in *Settlers and Expatriates: Britons over the Seas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 74–111.

65. As Bourdieu writes, "The language of strategy, which one is forced to use in order to designate the sequences of actions objectively oriented towards an end that are observed in all fields, must not mislead us: the most effective strategies, especially in fields dominated by values of disinterestedness, are those which, being the product of dispositions shaped by the immanent necessity of the field, tend to adjust themselves spontaneously to that necessity, without express intention or calculation" Pierre Bourdieu, *Pascalian Meditations* (Polity Press, 2000), 138.

66. Romain Bertrand, "Penser le Java mystique de l'âge moderne avec Foucault: Peut-on écrire une histoire "non intentionnaliste" du politique?," *Revue Internationale des Sciences Sociales* 1 (191 2007): 83–101; This follows his concluding remarks in his study on the ascetic practices of Javanese nobility Romain Bertrand, *Etat, noblesse et nationalisme à Java. La Tradition parfaite* (Paris: Karthala, 2005), 647-676.

likely, therefore, that club practices were felt, much more than they were thought. Understanding how colonial differences were naturalized and embodied through the mundane praxis of drinking and playing is thus particularly crucial.

As a whole, it is common to assume that the culture and lifestyle of the colonizers produced and fostered the need to differentiate them from the colonized. Colonialism is understood generally as a project which unambiguously emphasized Western culture as a purposive, outward sign of European supremacy. Yet cultural practices were often far more ambiguous than what post-colonial accounts typically take for granted. For instance, several authors assert that white culture was permeated by masculinity which described the colonized as effeminate, and therefore as relegated subjects.[67] Golf, for instance, a particularly popular game in the colonies at the beginning of the 20th century had long been seen as an effeminate, precious sports. This is also true for European sporting practices, which did not always have a white, Western origin. Polo originated from Persia and was discovered by the British in Manipur before becoming an officer's favourite game within the British Empire.[68] This was true of many practices which became iconic of British ruling class culture. The word gymkhana, which in India and East Africa designated the equestrian events that settlers patronized, was an Anglo-Indian deformation of an Hindi-Urdu expression. European culture overseas owed much to complex and ambiguous legacies, borrowing as much from the metropolitan experience as from the colonial encounter.[69] These reflections invite us to consider the autonomous dimension of sports and sociability. Both are a realm of their own, not entirely determined by outside factors and meanings, and not the mere product of their colonial context.[70]

Since club sociability happened in private institutions, this work relies heavily, if not entirely, on private sources. Many of these are kept in Kenya's and Great Britain's public repositories, but very few of these records deal directly with clubs. A few club files however have been found in the archives of the various Farmers Associations. This is the case for

67. See for instance: Mrinalini Sinha, *Colonial Masculinity. The "Manly Englishman" and the "Effeminate Bengali" in the Late Nineteenth Century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995); Philippa Levine, "Introduction: Why Gender and Empire?," in *Gender and Empire*, ed. Philippa Levine (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 1–13; Revathi Krishnaswamy, *Effeminism. The Economy of Colonial Desire* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998); Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self Under Colonialism.*

68. On the origins of polo, see: Chehabi and Guttmann, "From Iran to All of Asia: The Origins and Diffusion of Polo"; and Parkes, "Indigenous Polo in Northern Pakistan: Game and Power on the Periphery."

69. On extra-european genealogies of civil society, see for instance Romain Bertrand, "Habermas au Bengale, ou comment 'provincialiser l'Europe' avec Dipesh Chakrabarty," *Université de Lausanne. Travaux de Science Politique*, no. 40 (2009); Romain Bertrand, "Politiques du moment Colonial. Historicités indigènes et rapports vernaculaires au politique en "situation coloniale"," *Questions de Recherche*, no. 26 (2008); and the chapter dedicated to the study of *adda* in Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincialiser l'Europe. La pensée postcoloniale et la différence historique* (Paris: Éditions Amsterdam, 2009 [2000]), 271-315.

70. On the constitution of sports as an autonomous field see: Pierre Bourdieu, "Esprits d'État," *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 96-97 (March 1993): 49–62; On sociability as an autonomous form, see: Georg Simmel, "Sociability," *American Journal of Sociology* 55 (1949): 254–261.

the Koru and Soy clubs, for instance, in western Kenya, whose records cover more than fifty years of settlement. However, clubs were often run by the same small group of people, in a very personal fashion. Several club officials have kept these records as their own, and many might have not been referenced. A few club histories have been written on the basis of these records, during the colonial era or a few years thereafter. This is the case for several clubs in the capital, among which are included the Nairobi Club and the Muthaiga Country Club. These are often very factual, administrative accounts, which mostly cover expenses and sporting results. As a whole, although clubs were important institutions in settlers' lives, they did not bear an obvious political importance, and the conservation of their records have been neglected. Many were destroyed with the departure of white settlers, and in Kenya the great majority of clubs do not keep an archive. The archives of the United Kenya Club, for instance, were discarded by the committee in the early 2000s, seemingly to hide the misappropriation of the club's funds. However, and because the UKC was partly founded and officially supported by the authorities, its correspondence with various administrative departments allowed me to document its colonial history quite extensively.

Clubs rather appear in memoirs and recollections, where settlers and officials acknowledged their importance in their everyday life. The Bodleian Librray for Commonwealth and African Studies in Oxford has quite a lot of these memoirs. Although they are extremely instructive, these documents were written by settler elites, and little is known of the way the poorer elements of white society experienced club hierarchies and exclusionary practices. This bias indeed affects the coverage of the study. The paucity of sources gives little account of the differences between rural clubs, for instance, or the different areas of rural settlement. This is more widely true for the existing works on Kenya, which pay scant attention to these differences. Furthermore, an almost complete absence of archives for Asian clubs prevents us from making a more systematic comparison of their development as regards to European institutions. Quite a number of jubilee and anniversary books have been published by these in the past decades, but apart a few photographs, they say little of the Asian clubland of colonial Kenya, which deserves more than the few lines their remaining records support. The main limitation of this work lays in the difficulty of documenting everyday, embodied practices which were rarely verbalized; it forces the narrative to build on the few moments when a breach in rules or behaviours allow for their enunciation, usually transcribed as anecdotes in one's memoir, or a particularly turbulent meeting.

The first chapter of the present thesis shows how Kenyan clubs were shaped by the constraints of colonial life and therefore differed from what they were in England. Their development was first driven by racial competition between European and Asians, which emphasized the need for settlers to assert their cultural superiority. This process was assimilative and exclusionary. While women were admitted as members and upper class

segments mingled in a way they would not have in Great Britain, clubs excluded the poorest whites. They also developed differently in Nairobi and upcountry. In the capital, the competition between settlers and officials led to the development of a differentiated clubland, while farmers communities had no choice but to foster solidarity, through strongly integrative institutions. Rural clubs thus provided techniques to avoid disputes and smooth over class differences, and cast a veil over whites' weaknesses. The second chapter shows how, during the final two decades of British rule, the will of the colonial regime to integrate educated Africans into elite social institutions revealed the strength of racial prejudices. The United Kenya Club, Kenya's first multiracial establishment, gave rise to much discomfort, debate and dispute among its members. They reflected the tensions between the will to socialize African educated elites to the unsurpassed refinements of British civilization and the brutality by which Kenya's most radical nationalists were crushed during the Mau Mau Emergency. The third chapter examines how white sociability evolved during the last decades of British rule, and more especially the trivialization, within racially exclusive clubs, of official and unofficial politics. This serves to demonstrate that, rather than being purely leisure places, club sociability was deeply entangled with state power and legitimate authority. The pressure of African nationalism contradicted such a system, and as a desperate attempt to save their dominant position, liberal whites started to promote for Africans the principles on which their privileges had laid until then; that civic rights were linked to cultural achievements. A last chapter explores how after independence clubs were appropriated and transformed by African elites, torn between a nationalist rejection of the colonial past and the will to appropriate institutions that were so intimately linked to state power.

Chapter 1

The Everyday Production of Settlers' Culture

In 1896, when Rex Boustead established a club in Mombasa, East Africa had been a British protectorate for less than a year. The port was located on a ten-mile strip belonging to the Sultan of Zanzibar, for which the Foreign Office paid a rent. Previously administrated by the chartered and soon bankrupted British East Africa Company, the territory was for the greater part an arid land; communications were extremely slow and difficult. Hitherto, it had attracted only a few traders and caravans, generating a handful of outposts on the way to Uganda. The possibilities of settlement and development were tied to the building of a railway, which the Company, weakened by its attempts to conquest Buganda, could not handle alone. It required a direct involvement of the Foreign Office, which took over the territory in 1895. Railways construction staff arrived in Mombasa in 1895, as well as the first administrative officials.

Until then, the old Swahili port and new capital of the protectorate only had a few Europeans inhabitants, mostly British businessmen trading clothes and everyday commodities against ivory, spices and skins between the East African Coast, Zanzibar and the Indian subcontinent. Boustead was one of them. Born in England, he was the owner of a successful trading company based in Ceylon, which he sought to establish in Eastern Africa.[1] The Mombasa Club was founded as a business he owned with an associate, in the upper floor of their firm's premises, opened to "all English subjects resident in East Africa" and to "gentlemen of other nationalities" although they would not have the right to vote at any meeting.[2] It sought to benefit from the new influx of officials triggered by the launch of the railway and the declaration of protectorate. In 1896 Mombasa had become a capital and counted around a hundred Europeans, 24 administrative and 39 railways officials with their families, a dozen employees of British firms, plus a few missionaries. Sixty joined East Africa's first club.[3] The first set of rules showed a great concern for precedence. It required that the "Senior Resident Civil Officer in the Government service, the Senior

1. Peter J. L. Frankl, "Who Was Rex Boustead? An Excursus on the Mombasa Club's First Proprietor," *History in Africa* 30 (2003): 431–438.

2. The first set of rules, found in the British Library Newspapers at Colindale, is reproduced in: Peter J. L. Frankl, "The Early Years of the Mombasa Club: A Home Away from Home for European Christians," *History in Africa* 28 (2001): 78–81.

3. Edward Rodwell, *The Mombasa Club* (Mombasa: Mombasa Club, 1988), 12-15.

Resident Military Officer, the Senior Resident Officer of the Uganda Railways" should be members of the committee; one of them should be the chairman. This reflected the heterogeneous nature of the official staff in the East Africa Protectorate. Many had been hired from the British East Africa Company's former employees, a mix of adventurers and ex-army officers whose origins lay within the lower middle ranks of British society. Formal precedence marked hierarchies where a high culture and distinction were absent. Since gentility was more an aspiration than a reality, the gap between both generated written codes and prescriptions. The first club rules stipulated clearly that a member should behave everywhere with self-restraint and dignity: "if the conduct of any member, in or out of the club, be unworthy of the character of a gentleman", they made provisions for the committee to meet and rule on the case, and expel the offender.[4]

The importance of precedence also matched the military ethos of those who served British mastery over the Indian Ocean. The early days of the Protectorate were marked by the "pacification" of the sultanates who were hostile to the end of slavery implied by Zanzibar rule, under English trusteeship. The Navy bombed the rebels and launched expeditions, aided on land by its Indian and Arab regiments. Mombasa Club's first chairman, who served as the Protectorate's Acting Commissioner, had led the conquest of the Sultanate of Witu, in what is now the Lamu archipelago in Northern Kenya. The club, accordingly, was open to soldiers and sailors, offering discounted rates to naval members with cheaper rates to gun-room officers, and proudly displaying ship crests in its bar room. This was before British interest shifted to the inland. The new phase of the "conquest state" pushed and "pacified" the communications lines towards Lake Victoria.[5] In 1898, the railways had reached Nairobi, half-way to Buganda where a depot was built. Two years later it became the capital of the Protectorate.

In these early years of British presence, the status and purpose of the East African Protectorate was unclear. London knew that to answer the costs of conquest and the price of the railway, the Protectorate needed to be profitable. For British officials such a goal could hardly rest on African shoulders. Fostering migration was an obvious answer, and officials' attention first turned towards India. It was initially natural to see Kenya as an extension of the subcontinent, open to Asian migration. The railways was built by Indian workers and engineers. The Protectorate's administration was moulded according to India's: its currency was the Indian Rupee; its courts used Indian legal codes. As a rudimentary administration developed, all subordinate tasks which required literacy used Indian clerks and technicians, especially Goans. Furthermore, Indians had a long tradition of trade with the Swahili coast, with counters established deep into the hinterland, as far as Uganda. These ties within the continent led them to secure a monopoly on trade and

4. Frankl, "The Early Years of the Mombasa Club: A Home Away from Home for European Christians."

5. Cf. *Two: The Conquest State of Kenya 1895-1905*, in Bruce Berman and John Lonsdale, *Book Two: Violence & Ethnicity*, vol. 2 of *Unhappy Valley* (London, Nairobi and Athens (OH): James Currey, Heinemann Kenya / Ohio University Press, 1992), 13-44.

retail business in the new colony. For these many reasons, London saw Kenya as India's obvious western frontier.

Yet this purpose was soon contradicted by a handful of British aristocrats. Last-born sons of the gentry, eager to engage in gentleman farming, they found in this new country a place where they could fulfil social aspirations that were forbidden to them in industrial Britain. Hugh Cholmondeley, the son of the 2nd baron Delamere, had trekked East Africa from Somalia in 1898 and decided to settle three years later. He was soon followed by his brothers-in-law Berkeley and Galbraith Cole, the sons of the Earl of Enniskillen. A few others followed, when the outcome of the Boer war accelerated European migration. First, English-speaking South Africans came in numbers. With aristocrats they had converging interests; their ambition was to make East Africa a white, self-governing dominion.[6] They sought to make the Highlands a European preserve, evicting the natives from their ancestral land. A much poorer category of whites also arrived from the South. Afrikaners, many of whom had lost their farms during the Anglo-Boer war, travelled from South Africa by ox-wagon. From 1903 on, more than 60 families settled on the remote Usain-Gishu plateau in the Rift Valley where they founded Eldoret town; others were scattered North of Mount Kenya. Speaking their own language and living rather poorly, they long remained isolated from the rest of the white population.

European migrants and their political ambitions contradicted London's projects.[7] Apart from Transvaal and Hong Kong, for different historical reasons, no British colony was organised along racially exclusive territories and nothing pleaded in favour of doing so in East Africa. White settlement and the racial exclusivity of the Highlands happened without London's consent and owed much to settlers' pressures on the Protectorate's officials. They quickly obtained large grants of land, at the expense of Africans.[8] Thanks to aristocratic connections with the House of Lords in London, settlers were a powerful pressure group. As migration from South Africa grew, it was also increasingly radical and uncompromising.

This did not prevent Asians from coming to Kenya and by 1911, there were 11 787 against 3 175 Europeans. British authorities in London did not oppose such move. In the geopolitics of the Empire, India mattered much more than a handful of British aristocrats. Asian migration grew in consequence; their numbers doubled ten years later, and for the whole duration of British rule they were on average more than twice as many as Europeans. Their increasing numbers faced settlers growing influence. This contradictory pattern of migration drove much of the colony's early political life.

6. M.P.K. Sorrenson, *Origins of European Settlement in Kenya* (Nairobi: Oxford University Press-Eastern Africa, 1968), 230-231; David Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged. Britain's dirty war in Kenya and the end of the Empire* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2005), 77-86; Berman, *Control & Crisis in Colonial Kenya. The Dialectic of Domination*, 130-131.

7. Sorrenson, *Origins of European Settlement in Kenya*, 31-43.

8. R. M. A. Van Zwanenberg and Anne King, *An Economic History of Kenya and Uganda, 1800-1970* (London: MacMillan, 1975), 37.

non-native population in colonial Kenya

	1911	*1921*	*1926*	*1931*
European	3 175	9 651	12 529	16 812
Asian	11 787	25 253	29 324	43 623

Table 1: Colonial Office, *Annual Report on the Social and Economic Progress of the People of Kenya Colony and Protectorate, 1933, Colonial Report No. 1688*, London:1934.

These tensions were not easily arbitrated. This was because of London's indecisiveness as regards to Kenya's development, reflected in the colony's contradictory mode of rule. Kenya was first a Protectorate from 1898, ruled by a Commissioner appointed by the Foreign Office. Driven by the sole will to foster economic development and reduce the new territory's dependency on the Treasury, it encouraged both Asian and European migration, with much improvisation and little concern for the political consequences. Then, in 1905, British migration justified a transfer to the Colonial Office, with the appointment of a governor with executive powers and the creation of an ad hoc legislature; fifteen years later, Kenya officially became a Crown Colony, a change in name only. As a whole, Kenya's politics were marked by a chronic incapacity to solve racial issues, mostly because they were decided in both London and Nairobi. The colony was ruled by a governor, who had considerable autonomy as regards to the Colonial Office before which he was responsible. By contrast, Whitehall's prerogatives were reactive more than programmatic, answering only crisis and emergencies.[9] An uncompromising European stance and Asian radical opposition meant that the principle of a racial hierarchy was likely to be arbitrated in London, while in Nairobi the extent of white privilege and Indian prejudice as regards to land, education or political representation was constantly negotiated and contested. The tension between Asians and Europeans was further complicated by the implication, in London, of the governments of India and South Africa, respectively in favour of Asians and settlers. Africans, by contrast, attracted little interest.

The opposition between Asians and Europeans was fundamental to the development of the colony. It drove a growing divergence between settlers political ambitions and officials more moderate views. Their uncertain privilege fuelled the necessity for settlers to foster racial solidarity. These early tensions deeply shaped the colony's social landscape. Kenyan clubs were, consequently, different institutions than clubs in Britain, moulded by tensions, imperatives and social categories peculiar to the colonial context.

I. Settlers & Officials

In 1901, the Nairobi Club was founded along the same lines and by the same men as the Mombasa Club. A Boustead property, it catered to administrators and army officers, its

9. See chapter 3 in Berman, *Control & Crisis in Colonial Kenya. The Dialectic of Domination.*

rules requiring the most senior of them to hold committee positions. Presided over by John Ainsworth, one of the Protectorate's most able officials, the son of a Manchester tradesman, and himself a former businessman who had spent several years travelling in West and Central Africa before joining the British East Africa Company, the committee consisted of Sir George Whitehouse, the Railways Chief Engineer, Sir Harry Johnson, the British Commissioner for Uganda, Sir Charles Eliot, the British Commissioner for East Africa, G.E. Fowter, the Protectorate's first Treasurer, along with railway engineers, the Mombasa bishop and A. B. Percival, a famous hunter and game ranger.[10] The club's initial membership reflected the heterogeneity of the administration, with many men hired from the former British East Africa Company: James Martin, a Malta-born adventurer, once a caravan leader, apparently illiterate, who was eventually hired as a Collector at Eldama Ravine; W. J. Monson, Registrar General of Births, Deaths and Marriages, the former Secretary of the Mombasa Club, involved in amateur theatre and writer of satirical poetry; several army officers who retired in the colonial service, such as G. H. Goldfinch, an assistant in the Preservation of Game Department or Colonel Stordy, then the chief veterinary officer and specialist of bovine diseases and T.A. Wood, the first mayor of Nairobi, who owned a shop in which premises was fit out the city tea-room, and even a day school.[11] The capital was still very much a frontier town, with rudimentary amenities and corrugated-iron buildings, which allowed for little cultural refinement. As a facility, the Nairobi Club was barely different from the Railways Institute, a travelling institution that followed the building of the railways to cater to its technical and junior staff, white and Asian alike.[12]

Official precedence permeated Nairobi's social life. When the Colonial Office took over the Protectorate from the Foreign Office in 1905, it triggered a radical change in the recruitment and training of the Kenya Administration. In contrast with the ill-educated administrators of the British East Africa Company on which the colonial state had relied until then, London sought to recruit a new type of official, able to deal at par with the settlers and to exert authority over the natives. In accordance with the transformations of the India Civil Service, initiated half a century before and that had progressively permeated all colonial administrations, it started to recruit exclusively "all-rounders", public-school, Oxbridge educated gentlemen to serve in the Kenya administration.[13] These new officials despised both their predecessors from the Company and the technical, specialized

10. David Round-Turner, *Nairobi Club. The Story of 100 Years. A Celebration of the Club Centenary* (Nairobi, 2001), 21-23; T. H. R. Cashmore, *Studies in district administration in the East African Protectorate, 1895-1918*, Ph.D., Cambridge University, 1965, pp.24-30, quoted in: Berman, *Control & Crisis in Colonial Kenya. The Dialectic of Domination*, 98-99, 123-124.

11. These biographies of early members, prior to 1910, are drawn from comments below the club Men's Bar portraits. See also : Round-Turner, *Nairobi Club. The Story of 100 Years. A Celebration of the Club Centenary*, 111-115.

12. Robert Foran, *A Cuckoo in Kenya. The Reminiscences of a Pioneer Police Officer in British East Africa* (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1936), 119.

13. Berman, *Control & Crisis in Colonial Kenya. The Dialectic of Domination*, 97-104.

administrative staff.

The Nairobi Club, built on Nairobi's "Hill", in contrast to the "Plain" where the Railways Institute was set up, emphasized these distinctions. Robert Foran, who had come to East Africa to buy land and ended up joining the police as a Commissioner, experienced the rigidity of these class barriers when he tried to join the Nairobi Club:

> On visiting the Club one evening after sundown, I became aware immediately of an air of frigidity in my reception where formerly there existed only the utmost friendliness. I was unconscious of having given any cause for such a change in attitude. It was my first visit to the Club since joining the British East Africa Police, and this inexplicable coldness struck me rather a staggering blow. I cudgelled my brains to discover any logical reason for being in such marked disfavour, but was unable to fathom the mystery. The honorary secretary of the Club presently drew me aside and explained my *faux pas*. As I listened, my sense of astonishment turned to anger and I nearly exploded; but my Irish temperament came to the rescue and changed wrath into laughter. It was so utterly absurd that there was really no room for ill-temper. It seemed that I was no longer eligible to enjoy the privileges of the Club -as an ordinary, honorary or temporary member. Though I was an officer in the British East Africa Police, wore a star on my shoulder-straps as evidence of this fact, and held His Majesty's commission, yet I was now a subordinate grade official in East Africa and ineligible to mix with my superiors or their women-folk. […]It seemed that I definitely closed the social gates in my own face and, because of being now an Inspector of Police, lost caste in the social whirl of the infantile, ultra-suburban Nairobi.[14]

Social distinction between the administrators also justified the practice of "calling": each official had the duty to visit his seniors' houses, and to leave a card when the latter was absent.[15] The emphasis put on precedence was the only distinctive practice that delimited the different ranks in the administration, since material conditions only permitted low-key lifestyles and basic ceremonials. It was only in 1914 that the Nairobi Club, the protectorate's most prestigious establishment, left its wooden, prefabricated bungalow for massive, late-Victorian stone premises.[16]

Before the First World War, settlers had obtained the right to control all land allocations in the Kenya Highlands. This mostly happened through vast appropriations of land by the wealthiest settlers, led by Delamere and the aristocratic set, who engaged in speculation and land subdivision. It enforced, de facto, the racial exclusivity of the Highlands and triggered the eviction of the Africans from their pastures, despite London's reluctance. As settlement progressed, labour became another bone of contention between settlers and

14. Foran, *A Cuckoo in Kenya. The Reminiscences of a Pioneer Police Officer in British East Africa*, 117-118.

15. Christine S. Nicholls, *Red Strangers. The White Tribe of Kenya* (London: Timewell Press, 2005), 168-9.

16. See Per Geheb's notes on the Nairobi Club premises in Round-Turner, *Nairobi Club. The Story of 100 Years. A Celebration of the Club Centenary*, 116.

officials. Both the colonial state and European farms relied upon the native workforce, but for Africans direct peasant production was more profitable than wage labour, and they had little incentive to join settlers' estates. In 1906, settlers successfully advocated for a Masters & Servants ordinance that forced Africans to engage in wage labour.[17] Yet, while contracting native labour, settlers continued to overstep the provincial administration. The latter, through appointed chiefs who acted as intermediaries in the recruitment chain, tried to gain the consent of African societies in the process of labour extraction.[18] Officials, especially the District Officers (DO) and Commissioners (DC) on the field, were reluctant to accept settlers' informal practices of labour extraction, since they thought they would disrupt order in African societies and trigger undesirable social changes. This further inflamed the split between settlers and officials, since the former were reluctant to accept any official control over native labour in European estates.

Settlers' radicalism expressed itself in violent ways. Led by Delamere, they organized demonstrations before the Governor's House, in order to obtain concessions on labour policies. Ewart Grogan, an adventurer with strong South African connections and the leader of the Colonist Association, had led the public flogging of three Kikuyu servants in Nairobi, for a presumed outrage to some white women they had refused to greet.[19] Since they feared a native rebellion, the South African cluster pressed the authorities for war rather than negotiation with the last independent tribes; this led to a series of punitive expeditions against the Nandi and the Kisii, and to a general tolerance over repressive behaviours against all Africans.

Settlers' radicalism was further fuelled by the uncertainty of their condition. The 2000 Europeans that populated the Protectorate in 1907 were fewer than in any other British colony. The racial exclusiveness of the White Highlands was guaranteed by neither law nor status; only by a series of "pledges" and verbal statements made by the various governors and secretaries of State.[20] It was locally enforced by the Highland Board, a settlers-dominated institution which supervised and could veto all land transfers in the region In a similar way, the confinement of Africans to native reserves, which started in the wake of their eviction from the fertile highlands, was not made official until 1939.[21]

The tensions between settlers and officials permeated Kenya's social landscape. In Nairobi, it fostered the formation of a settlers-dominated club. In the Nairobi Club the

17. David Anderson, "Master and Servant in Colonial Kenya," *The Journal of African History* 43, no. 3 (2000): 459–485.

18. Cf. Chapter 2 Anthony Clayton and Donald Savage, *Government and Labour in Kenya, 1895-1963* (Londres: Frank Cass, 1974), 20-80; Berman, *Control & Crisis in Colonial Kenya. The Dialectic of Domination*, 60-62.

19. Berman, *Control & Crisis in Colonial Kenya. The Dialectic of Domination*, 64; David Anderson, "Punishment, Race and "The Raw Native": Settler Society and Kenya's Flogging Scandals, 1895-1930," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 37, no. 3 (2011): 479–497.

20. Van Zwanenberg and King, *An Economic History of Kenya and Uganda, 1800-1970*, 34; George Bennett, *Kenya A Political History. The Colonial Period* (Londres: Oxford University Press, 1963), 24.

21. Van Zwanenberg and King, *An Economic History of Kenya and Uganda, 1800-1970*, 34-35.

latter had progressively formed a clique apart, increasingly antagonistic to the new generation of officials who had taken over the administration. They complained that they were poorly treated and represented by a committee in which officials were the majority.[22] In 1912, Major Archibald Morrison, the heir to a City Merchant of London and one of England's richest man, toured the colony on a big-game hunting safari. Morrison was keen on investing in Africa, especially since the Protectorate offered vast opportunities for land speculation. He therefore proposed to a group of wealthy settlers, including Ewart Grogan and Lord Delamere, to develop a residential suburb in the vicinity of Nairobi, with a country club and a nine-hole golf course. He left them with a £60,000 cheque to develop the project in his name before leaving Kenya, never to return. Two years later, the Muthaiga Country Club was opened, built in a distinctive, exuberant architectural style, with pink-painted stucco walls and "the best cellar ever seen in Africa".[23] Muthaiga epitomised the extravagant ethos of the settlers' upper ranks, eager to distinguish themselves from the Nairobi Club's obsession for precedence and self-restraint. One of the early members recalls:

> With the help of friends who owned a vineyard near Bordeaux, we imported claret from the first four vineyards of Paulliac, Lafitte, Latour etc., and so on downwards to the cheaper but lighter clarets, all excellent. The same pattern persisted with the burgundies, the Hick and Moselle. The ports were fully represented in the best that could be secured as also the sherries. Every liqueur ever heard of was imported and we drank the brandy recommended by City Banker friends. We also had a shop which offered for sale all the best chocolates Charbonel et Walker, etc., as also the best of soaps, cosmetics, toilet requisites, etc., all that is dear to the hearts of men and women, in fact an Asprey in Miniature.
>
> The Club's head chef was imported for us by the Bombay Yacht Club, a prince of cooks if ever there was one, whose work was of the highest standard throughout the day from the croissants at breakfast to the fondants that graced the tables at dinner.[24]

Muthaiga increasingly reflected settlers' predominance over the colonial state. By the First World War they had gained a political importance out of proportion with their demographic weight. They obtained the passing of the Native Registration Ordinance, which tightened the control over native labour.[25] From 1915, the land was granted on a 999-year lease, and all land transfers between the races were subjected to government approval, furthering the sanctuarization of the Highlands.[26] Even more importantly, settlers obtained an elective representation at the Legislative Council, at the expense of the

22. RHO Micr. Afr. 595 Titus Oates: History of the Muthaiga Country Club, pp. 1-2.
23. ibid, pp. 4-5
24. ibid, p.5
25. Bennett, *Kenya A Political History. The Colonial Period*, 37-39.
26. Berman, *Control & Crisis in Colonial Kenya. The Dialectic of Domination*, 56.

other races, especially Asians, who were twice as many as the Europeans.[27] The right of vote was given only to "male British subjects of European origin" and the definition of the electoral constituencies gave much more weight to the rural areas than to the cities, despite the fact that only half of the white population resided upcountry.[28] Therefore, the political life of the Protectorate was excessively dependent on its farming community, which was the most conservative element of the European population.

In rural Kenya, however, the relationships between settlers and officials were never as conflictual as they were in Nairobi. Where Europeans were only a few they showed more solidarity than in status-concerned Nairobi. This was also due to the particular *ethos* of provincial commissioners, the highly independent, all-rounder elite of colonial administration.[29] Paternalistic, discretionary and bureaucratic in its application, their authority was permeated with anti-rationalism, anti-individualism, and a strong antipathy to radical changes and open conflicts. Field officials had an obsession for order and stability, which they thought was guaranteed by clear hierarchies and strong institutions. These values were backed by organic social representations and a deep pastoral nostalgia, rooted in the ruling traditions of the British aristocracy.[30] Rather than confronting the farmers in settled areas, they preferred to encourage the formation of institutions through which they could patronize the European communities and exert a moral influence. Kenya's first rural clubs had been initiated by provincial commissioners (PC). The local DC had founded the Meru Club in 1910; the same year the Nyeri Club was built by a PC and a forest officer, while the assistant DC in Kiambu had started a golf course in 1913. First the outpost -*boma*- of an administrative vanguard, these clubs were soon opened to settlers.[31] In Kakamega for instance, the DC decided to open a golf course for all Europeans, after he realized that in his location tennis was the only activity available for settlers' enjoyment.[32] Their distaste for conflicts and politics led them to organize games which would lower social antagonisms. The Kiambu yearly polo tournament, played with mules and ponies, opposed settlers and officials on the field and brought them together in the bar.

II. Racial Privilege and Gentility Culture

Kenya's early clubs had showed little explicit concern for race. Although rules often mentioned that no natives were permitted in the premises, this was only to prevent members

27. In 1920 there were 23 000 Asians for 10 000 Europeans.

28. Bennett, *Kenya A Political History. The Colonial Period*, 40.

29. Berman, *Control & Crisis in Colonial Kenya. The Dialectic of Domination*, 81.

30. Berman, *Control & Crisis in Colonial Kenya. The Dialectic of Domination*, 104-115; Kennedy, *Islands of the White. Settlers Society in Kenya and Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1939*, 46-47.

31. In Kiswahili, a *boma* means an enclosure, by extension and use an administrative post.

32. R. W. Hooper, *The Game of Golf in East Africa* (Nairobi: W. Boyd / Company, 1953), 76,88,110, 119-120.

from coming with their servants. Both Nairobi and Mombasa Clubs' by-laws had such regulations, while their catering was operated by native and Asian staff, duly dressed in uniforms. Mombasa's stewards were Goans, while the junior staff was hired among Swahili fishermen, all of them Muslims. It does not seem that the members considered racial borders at threat. According to the rules, those eligible for membership were first defined as regards to their nationality, while race was not mentioned. A memoir noted that the informal criteria of eligibility included a salary of £250 a year, and no European holding a junior position could have expected to join.[33] Status, rather than colour, determined clubability. During the early years of British occupation, this lack of concern for race reflected both the improvisations of the conquest and London's indecision as regards to East Africa's future, in clubs which were still largely dominated by officials.

However, things started to change with the second wave of European migration and the Soldiers Settlement Scheme of 1919. The largest land allocation in the colony's history, it targeted ex-army officers who had served under British colours during the War. Two million acres were distributed to 685 individuals, with the requirement that all would be "of pure European origin". The applicants were also selected as regards to their economic resources. Beneficiaries were expected to own more than £1 000 of capital and to earn £200 of annual income. These drastic preconditions were aimed at preventing future settlers from relying on the state for subsistence. The most complete account of the scheme and its outcomes established that with such prerequisites less than 2% of the British population could have afforded to settle in Kenya, and that in fact most applicants were significantly wealthier. Among the successful candidates were a majority of field grades, major and above, while a third were public-school educated. Sixty-one of the beneficiaries attended Oxbridge and 137 Sandhurst or Woolwich. Even more strikingly the scheme benefited to ninety-eight migrants whose name appeared in *Burke's British Peerage & Baronetage* or *Landed Gentry*.[34]

Besides wealth and status, two sets of circumstances were crucial in shaping these migrants' attitudes to settlement and towards other races. First, ex-officers' migration was driven by the economic conditions they faced in post-war Britain. A great number of them were then unemployed, and the galloping inflation impoverished many. Furthermore, the war had led servants to leave their former duties in order to work in factories; as a consequence the cost of domestic labour soared. When peace came, a significant part of the British middle class could no longer afford servants. By contrast East Africa, with free land and cheap labour, offered an escape from the "plight of the middle class", the fear and experience of social downgrading. As a whole, this generation of white migrants to Kenya fled economic circumstances which contradicted their social aspirations. They

33. Foran, *A Cuckoo in Kenya. The Reminiscences of a Pioneer Police Officer in British East Africa*, 224.

34. C. J. D. Duder, ""Men of the Officer Class": The Participants in the 1919 Soldier Settlement Scheme in Kenya," *African Affairs* 92, no. 366 (1993): 69–87.

expected to enjoy in Kenya the lifestyle of independent individuals that they could no longer afford in Britain.[35] Second, the Soldiers Settlement Scheme also concerned officers who already lived in the British colonies. Thirty-nine had served in the Indian Army, while 14 were planters in India; several others were Irish Protestants and belonged to the Ascendancy, which was increasingly contested since the beginning of the Troubles. In both cases they left colonies where their power and prestige was waning. Leaving Ireland and India because of nationalisms, they were not willing to experience a similar fate in Kenya.[36]

These two elements brought the new wave of migrants to embrace a lifestyle that valued the vanishing attributes of the British middle classes: the possession of large farming estates, with little manual labour; the hiring of peasants and servants; the practice of public-school sports and culture. White migrants also endorsed uncompromising views as regards to racial privilege, especially on matters of land ownership and political representation. These peculiarities of post-war migration eventually lessened the gap between Kenya settlers and officials, at the formers' advantage: settlers had earned such an influence that, in practice, the Kenyan Government decided it would always seek settlers' consent to pass bills. But the boundaries between the two groups were increasingly blurred, especially since officials were granted the right to acquire land in the colony. Many retired in Kenya, among the white farmers communities of which they soon embraced the views.[37]

These changes, however, did not assure settlers' hegemony. While whites gained momentum with officers' migration, the Great War had also shed light on India's weight in the geopolitics of the British Empire. Indian troops and taxpayers had been pivotal in securing victory. As regards to India's diplomatic importance, London could not endorse settlers' grasp over the Protectorate's affairs. In Kenya, Asians, too, protested. The East African branch of the Indian National Congress had been formed in 1911 to oppose the end of Asian nominated representation at the LegCo. It claimed Indians had the right to enjoy perfect equality with the Europeans. Although most Asians were not interested in farming, they resented the rampant racial enclosure of the Highlands.[38] In 1920, the first post-war elections to the Legislative Council epitomized racial tensions, since Indians and Arabs only had nominated representatives while Europeans enjoyed full voting rights. Against rising claims for equal citizenship between all races, settlers justified their privileges by claiming that they had a duty to expose Africans to the virtues of Western civilization, and that their role was therefore to protect the natives from Asians' obnox-

35. Michael Redley, "The Politics of a Predicament: the white community in Kenya 1918-32" (PhD diss., University of Cambridge, 1976), 9-10.

36. Duder, ""Men of the Officer Class": The Participants in the 1919 Soldier Settlement Scheme in Kenya," 78-79.

37. Bennett, *Kenya A Political History. The Colonial Period*, 48.

38. On the frictions between Europeans and Asians and the latter's struggles to obtain an equality of status see Chapter III and IV in: Jagit Singh Mangat, *A History of the Asians in East Africa* (Jersey Island: Founthill Trust, 2012 [1969]), 63-133.

ious moral influence.[39] They fiercely campaigned for the latter to be barred from owning land in the highlands, and to reject a common roll which would have led to political equality.[40] These controversies soon reached an imperial scale: the government of India, aware of the strength of Asian nationalist movements, pressed Whitehall to redefine its policy in favour of East Africa's Indians. On the other side, South African leaders, through General Jan Smuts, pushed for East Africa to become a new Transvaal under self-government.[41] In Kenya, the controversy reached its acme when settlers threatened to raise a militia and kidnap the Governor if they did not obtain an immediate restriction of Asian immigration and a autonomous government. London responded to this agitation by opening official negotiations in 1923, where both the Colonial and the India Offices tried to settle the conflict. The result was the Devonshire White Paper. Its answer to the Indian crisis was the ad hoc doctrine of "imperial trusteeship", which guaranteed the "paramountcy of African interests", of which Whitehall presented itself as the guardian. As for the feud between Asians and Europeans, it declared a draw and satisfied nobody. On the one hand, it refused Asians a common right with Europeans to elect LegCo representatives, although they gained three elected members; furthermore, London refused to interfere with the segregative land policies on which lay the racial exclusivity of the White Highlands. On the other hand, it rejected the idea of immigration restrictions, and abolished urban segregation; it also postponed *sine die* any hope for a white, responsible government.[42]

The "Indian Crisis" and its aftermath had several consequences on patterns of sociability and self-distinction in the colony. Because settlers claimed that civic rights were a matter of civilization, Indians zealously embraced the lifestyle of respectable citizens, which backed their aspirations to be considered on a par with Europeans. Although the majority of them came from the lower castes in India, they formed in Kenya clubs that sought to match European standards. Until then, yet for similar reasons, only Goans had founded clubs. Through Catholicism they were culturally close to Europeans, and the first to claim equal rights on cultural grounds. A Portuguese Cricket Club had been created in 1899 in Nairobi among the railways employees, as a claim to Europeaness while racial hierarchies were still unsettled. From 1912, they had started an Asian Sports Association, which began to supervise all Indian cricket competitions in Kenya. Non-Christian castes took interest in clubs a few years later, after the Great War, when Asian-European relations were at their worst. The authorities in Nairobi, whose views were that sports and games pacified race relations, responded favourably to Asian aspirations and allocated

39. Bennett, *Kenya A Political History. The Colonial Period*, 43.

40. Robert M. Maxon, *Struggle for Kenya: the Loss and Reassertion of Imperial Initiative, 1912-1923* (Cranbury, London, Mississauga: Associated University Presses, 1993), 216.

41. Bennett, *Kenya A Political History. The Colonial Period*, 46.

42. Bennett, *Kenya A Political History. The Colonial Period*, 49-51; C. J. D. Duder, "The Settler Response to the Indian Crisis of 1923 in Kenya: Brigadier General Philip Wheatley and "Direct Action"," *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 17, no. 3 (1989): 349–73.

EUROPEAN GENDER BALANCE, 1911-1931

number of females to 100 males	
1911	51
1921	66
1926	74
1931	79

Table 2: Colonial Office, *Annual Report on the Social and Economic Progress of the People of Kenya Colony and Protectorate, 1933, Colonial Report No. 1688*, London:1934

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plots in Ngara and Parklands for the purpose of developing new clubs. As in India, each community founded its own cricket club: the Sikh Union, first named Khalsa Union, had a cricket team from 1928; the Goan Institute, first named the Indo-Portuguese Institute and the Goan Gymkhana followed, along with the Patel Club, the Ismaili Sports Club and eventually the Suleiman Verjee Gymkhana, a "cosmopolitan" institution which welcomed all Asians.[43]

Second, settlers' leaders understood that to be recognized by London as the legitimate trustees of African advancement, they had to appear as the unique guardians of Britain's impassable civilizing values. Emphasis on white prestige countered Asian claims for equal citizenship. Led by their aristocratic and public-schooled leaders, settlers engaged in patterns of self-distinction that were extravagant and increasingly out of touch with the lifestyle the majority of them could actually afford. Furthermore, post-war migration, with the coming of ex-officers whose main purpose was to escape social downgrading, accelerated the intertwining of racial privilege and middle-class, public-school culture. Their extreme sensitivity to the issue of indigenous nationalisms in the Empire intensified this pattern of racial distinction.

At the turn of the 1920s, a new emphasis on racial segregation testified to this phenomenon, with the establishment of a strict colour bar which precluded any casual contact between the races in hotels, restaurants, bars or trains. As regards to Africans the measure was substantiated by a concern for hygiene, while for Asians the bar was rather supported by claims that an impassable cultural difference prevented the races from mixing.[44] From 1923, the rules of European clubs reflected this tendency and started to mention that their membership was only opened to individuals "of pure European descent". This was the result of increased racial awareness, in order to reassess the impossibility of any Indian application. Equally important, the measure also targeted miscegenation. In a colony

43. On the history of Asian clubs in Kenya see: Cynthia Salvadori, *Through Open Doors. A View of Asian Cultures in Kenya* (Nairobi: Kenway Publications, 1983), 230-231 & 285-287; Swaran Singh Sodi, *Nairobi Gymkhana. 75th Anniversary Souvenir Brochure, "Our Heritage"* (Nairobi, 2003); *Goan Gymkhana. 1936-2011. Platinum Jubilee Souvenir* (2011).

44. Colonial Office, *Indians in Kenya*, London: HMSO, 1923 quoted in Fassil Demissie, *Colonial Architecture and UrbUrban in Africa. Intertwined and Contested Histories* (Ashgate Publishing, 2012), 149; Norman Leys, *The Colour Bar in East Africa* (Hogarth Press, 1941).

where male were twice as many as females, interracial sexual relations were prevalent. Officials bought girls from Maasai villages; King's African Rifles officers kept girls and boys, and sometimes took them to the mess; isolated farmers sought Kikuyu girls "for dinner". By the mid 1920s the arrival of women in significant numbers increased the public reprobation on miscegenation. Although the lack of documentation makes it hard to assess the number of children born of these unions, it was undoubtedly feared that mixed children would blur the boundaries between blacks and whites and harm racial prestige on which privilege now depended.[45] As regards to what was increasingly condemned as a deviance, clubs made statements which reasserted racial boundaries.

Explicit emphasis on racial boundaries in Kenya suggested that they were no longer self-evident elsewhere. At the imperial scale, racial segregation was a very conservative stance. "Mixed" clubs had existed in India since the 1860s, for instance in Calcutta where the Cosmopolitan Club, and then the India Club were opened to applicants of all races provided they could afford the membership.[46] These measures were all the more significant that none of the colony laws actually mentioned the matter of racial discrimination in social spaces and public places. However, albeit informal in principle, the colour bar was tightly enforced in practice. The many licensing and education boards, the professional, business and hotel-keepers associations, all settler-dominated institutions, formed the unofficial apparatus through which racial borders were organized and performed in the everyday life. This apparatus was barely contested among the whites; Europeans' likeness of interests and aspirations fostered consensus.

III. Cultural Entrepreneurs

Club formation, in the political context of the Indian Crisis, was especially driven by settlers' leaders. Because Kenya's politics were decided in both London and Nairobi, these twofold arenas shaped settlers' leadership. In Nairobi, settlers' leaders met at the Convention of Associations, their unofficial "parliament", a federation of local agricultural associations formed in 1910 which met to formulate and voice their claims, at the LegCo or to the Governor. Because representatives at the Convention were the chairs of local farmers and planters associations, settlers' politics favoured the largest landowners. Connections in London, too, determined leadership. A Whitehall decision could ruin European privilege, especially since officials in Britain had always been sceptical as regards to the economic potential of white settlement. Lord Delamere, then Lord Francis Scott, both aristocrats with family ties in Britain's political spheres, were therefore the best men to promote settlers' interests where they were at threat. Francis George Montagu

45. Kennedy, *Islands of the White. Settlers Society in Kenya and Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1939*, 174-179.

46. Sinha, "Britishness, Clubbability, and the Colonial Public Sphere: The Genealogy of an Imperial Institution in Colonial India," 513.

Douglas Scott was settlers' leader from the mid-1920s and their delegate to the British Government. The sixth son of the sixth Duke of Buccleuch, an Old Etonian and Oxonian, he had fought in South Africa and in France as a grenadier guard before coming to Kenya, where he ran one of the colony's largest plantation, the 5 000-acre Deloraine estate. Scott epitomized settlers' leadership, taking the chairmanship of the Convention of Associations, and representing settlers before both the Kenya and British Government. In the districts of rural Kenya aristocrats and ex-officers also took charge of the welfare and social aspects of their community. The predominance of these men over the colony's politics played a great role in shaping white culture according to aristocratic and public-school standards. The Indian crisis made them aware that whites' supremacy relied on their ability to assert their cultural superiority. They sought to instil the best of the British values into their communities, and took the lead of patronage in rural locations.

In the early 1920s, settlers' politicians started to become cultural entrepreneurs, investing their time, skills and money to create and support strong gentlemanly institutions. In the Eastern part of the White Highlands, along the lakes between Naivasha and Nakuru where the largest estates were, most clubs were founded by aristocrats. Lord Scott so launched the Njoro Country Club in 1920, in the vicinity of his farm. He became the club's first president, and two years later opened the fairways of the Naivasha Golf Club. Similarly, Josslyn Victor Hays, the 22nd Earl of Erroll, Hereditary High Constable of Scotland and the Convention of Association Secretary was particularly committed to Naivasha's welfare. In 1932, he took part in the foundation of the Naivasha Yacht Club and was elected its first commodore at its inaugural meeting. The club aimed at encouraging yacht building and sailing, and organized regatta. A cup bore Erroll's name, which was first sailed in 1933. Erroll also laid out a polo ground for the Naivasha Sports Club, allegedly one of the best in the country and eventually added a golf course, albeit not being a player, and a library. While he joined settlers politics as a member of the Legislative Council in the late 1930s, Hays spent a considerable amount of time promoting the foundation of a greyhound racing club in Nairobi.[47] Similarly, in the late 1930s, an ageing Delamere kept on visiting upcountry clubs and associations, offering lavish dinners wherever he went. Jeanette Pierce, a long-standing committee member of the Thomson Falls Country Club remembered that "one of the highlights of this club was when Lord Delamere came to give us all a talk, everyone taking cooked chicken, turkeys, and the like".[48]

In the areas of soldiers settlement, the same dynamics applied. The highest officer ranks, usually commissioned officers, took charge of organizing leisure and welfare institutions in their locality. Most of the clubs which were founded in the 1920s, in the wake

47. Errol Trzebinski, *The Life and Death of Lord Erroll. The Truth Behind the Happy Valley Murder* (London: Fourth Estate, 2000), 96-98.

48. RHO Mss. Afr. s. 1540, Jeanette Pierce, History of the Thomson Falls Country Club I, 1938-64.

of the Soldiers Settlement Scheme, were started by these men. The Ruiru Club was built over Major Goldsworthy's farm in 1922; the Kianzabe Club, in Ol Donyo Sabuk, was jointly founded by a major and a commander. The development of the Thomson Falls Country Club owed to Brigadier General Arthur Wainewright, its first president. Gilgil Club benefited from the voluntary work of Lieutenant-Colonel Alan Gibson, its secretary and greenkeeper, who opened the club premises on Empire Day, 1926. Retired army officers brought to clubs their attachment for military customs and regimental traditions, which served the *esprit de corps* that they expected from their communities. They provided clubs with flags, ties and a name to defend on the sports fields through physical and outdoor activities, which were organised in an orderly, disciplined manner.

Patronage over these institutions was also a way for senior officers to reassert military hierarchies over communities of ex-army men. In the early 1920s, Brigadier General Philip Wheatley was the unquestioned leader of Nanyuki, a semi-arid, pastoral district of northern Kenya that had been settled with the 1919 Soldiers' scheme. He was a son of the landed gentry and a retired artillery officer from the Indian Army, where during his 22 years of service he seemed to have been interested in little more than horse polo and big game hunting. A World War veteran, he took upon himself the responsibility of turning Nanyuki into "a real gentleman's place".[49] Driven by an inflexible repugnance for Indian nationalism as he had experienced it in India, he was elected from 1921 to the Nanyuki Vigilance Committee. At the peak of the Indian Crisis, this was a group in charge of rallying a settlers' militia to fight the officials and gain independence under white rule, should London have infringed upon the principles of European settlement. He was equally involved in Nanyuki's social life, taking over the Farmers Association and the local sports club. As he wrote to his father in 1922:

> Taking over the businesses of the Nanyuki Farmers Association and the Nanyuki Sports Club was really rather comic. I think however that after a forthright real hard graft I've got everything more or less in order now. But it has meant in both cases endless writing owing to the complete lack of any business methods of any kind and the impossible slackness of both the men I took over from. The settlers were getting fed up with the pair of them. I'm now busy making what I think will be a toppling race course, polo ground and gymkhana ground.[50]

Wheatley's words suggest that in the little parishes of the White Highlands, isolated from Nairobi, the diffusion and promotion of gentlemanly standards was the result of deliberate cultural work, undertaken by the higher strata of settlers' society.

This also suggests that for settlers leaders, the cultural and social standards of their community did not always match their own aspirations, and what they considered a

49. Duder, "The Settler Response to the Indian Crisis of 1923 in Kenya: Brigadier General Philip Wheatley and "Direct Action"," 352.

50. Letter from P. Wheatley to his father, 16-05-1922, RHO MSS Afr. s. 799, Letters from and to Philip Wheatley

desirable lifestyle for all whites in Africa. There were discrepancies between the aspirations of the few aristocratic and military elites who invested in clubs for racial prestige and the more common settler, whose enjoyment of these places had little to do with political motives. This does not necessarily mean that in Kenya European behaviour as a whole was marked by depravity, drunkenness and promiscuity, as would suggest the common stereotype associated with Kenya's whites. It might have been the case as regards to George V's Britain, since a strict temperance and self-restraint were the dominant social standards against which deviance was assessed. In Kenya however, alcoholic consumption was by no means unusual in comparison to Europe's standards.[51] Promiscuity too might have been greatly exaggerated, in the wake of the infamous Happy Valley Set, a group of decadent aristocrats who settled in the Wanjohi Valley from the 1920s and whose nefarious adventures had an echo in the British press. By contrast, most settlers' memoirs convey the notion that everyday life in rural Kenya was not so extravagant. Yet these behaviours were used, in London, to criticize colonialism and settlers' leaders were aware of this. This is why, at the time of the Indian Crisis, settlers became anxious not to expose racial privilege to easy criticism. Settlers' difficult economic condition worried their leaders too, because it impaired the production of prestige. Polo was played on donkeys and golf on browns rather than greens, cricket and tennis on rough grounds; clubhouses were made of wood or corrugated iron.

To counter their unpleasant image in London, settlers' leaders started to patronize the social life of the colony, chiefly polo events, and later golf. While funding tournaments and erecting clubs buildings, they raised the material standards of settlers' leisure. Lord Francis Scott over presided most of the southern Rift Valley polo tournaments, while Josh Hayes was Naivasha's main sponsor for golf and yachting. Gentlemanly patronage set the cultural tone of the colony and fostered an extravagant lifestyle to which all Europeans were expected to aspire.[52]

IV. Inequalities, Assimilation & Exclusion

If Kenya's clubs expressed whites' unity in racial privilege, the nature of their social homogeneity must be discussed. Despite migration policies, not all settlers were ex-officers or aristocrats; there were discrepancies of status, wealth and occupation. The main split was between town and country. Nearly half of Europeans lived in the cities, chiefly in Nairobi and Mombasa. They formed a significant professional, business class, which

51. Justin Willis, *Potent Brews. A Social History of Alcohol in East Africa, 1850-1999* (Nairobi, Oxford, Athens (OH), Kampala, Dar Es Salaam: The British Institute in Eastern Africa, James Currey, Ohio University Press, East African Educational Publishers, Fountain Publishers, Mkuki na Nyota, 2002), 162-163.

52. On settlers' extravagance see: Christopher C. Wrigley, "Kenya: the Patterns of Economic Life. 1902-45," in *History of East Africa. Volume Two*, ed. Vincent Harlow and Chilver E. M. (1965), 220.

PERCENTAGE OF EUROPEANS BY OCCUPATION

	1926	*1931*
Agricultural	18	15
Commercial	10	13
Government and municipal	10	10
Professional	6	7
Industrial	5	6
Personal	2	2
Retired	*counted w/ wom. & child.*	4
Married women and children	49	43

Table 3: Percentage of Europeans by occupation, 1926, 1931. Colonial Office, *Annual Report on the Social and Economic Progress of the People of Kenya Colony and Protectorate, 1933, Colonial Report No. 1688*, London:1934.

along with government officials were much more moderate than the farmers upcountry. The dynamics of their sociability, as we will see, considerably differed from that of the countryside. Both rural and urban settlers, however, originated from the middle or upper ranks of British society, while very few were engaged in labour wage.

This was not only due to the particular traits of white migration. Until the mid-1920s, it seems that quite a number of European engaged in store-keeping and retail in small settlement towns, often besides their farming activity. However, most were amateurs, with little experience of such occupation, and the majority gave up after a few years.[53] Many of these white traders left Kenya as a consequence. Asians entrepreneurs, thanks to prior experience, networks and low wages took over most of the small trade and services in the colony. Immigration restrictions and Asian competition precluded the formation of a white working class, while the settlers who could afford to stay rather pursued the ideal of an independent life that wage labour contradicted.

As regards to professionals and officials, the farming communities which, by the 1920s, dominated the colony's political life, never represented more than a strong minority, though encompassing a great variety of economic conditions. In 1926, out of 5800 European men, only 1805 Europeans worked in agriculture, and as little as a eighth of the White Highlands was actually cultivated.[54] White agriculture was split between plantations and settler-owned farms. Despite a pre-war failure with flax, the former grew coffee and sisal, and by the mid 1930s tea and pyrethrum, all profitable, export crops. Plantations required capital, skills and native labour; only the wealthiest settlers could afford to run such enterprises, and most were in fact owned by London-based companies. They hired managers locally, often the Anglo-South Africans whose agricultural skills

53. C. J. D. Duder and C. P. Youé, "Paice's Place: Race and Politics in Nanyuki District, Kenya, in the 1920s," *African Affairs* 93, no. 371 (1994): 251-252.

54. Redley, M. G., *The Politics of a Predicament: the White Community in Kenya, 1950-1974*, Ph.D., Cambridge University, 1978, quoted in: David Anderson, "Sexual Threat and Settler Society: "Black Perils" in Kenya, c. 1907-30," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 38, no. 1 (2010): 113; and: Van Zwanenberg and King, *An Economic History of Kenya and Uganda, 1800-1970*, 84.

were valued. This made plantation agriculture profitable for the wealthiest settlers, with access to capital and who could afford to grow export crops. The average Kenyan settler, by contrast, engaged in the English-style farming he knew best, producing wool, wheat, maize and dairy. However, because of the land speculation that had taken place in the early years of European settlement, many of the "small men" were indebted, either to their banks or their farmers association. As a consequence, most settlers produced at costs substantially higher than the international market prices. By the mid-1920s, wheat, dairy and maize counted for half of the Highlands production, while the semi-arid lands north of Mount Kenya were devoted to cattle and sheep, all produces for which there was no export market at such prices. Moreover, these were vulnerable crops, subject to tropical diseases and locusts; they were hardly profitable unless subsidized, and could not rival African production without the protectionist policies that settlers forced the administration to implement. The inexperience and inefficiency of many farmers further accelerated the failure of settlers' agriculture. This meant that the majority of settlers farmers lived rather poorly, barely at subsistence level, until the Second World War.[55] Meanwhile many gave up, moving to the cities or leaving the colony. In the aftermath of the 1929 crisis, 20% of Kenyan farmers abandoned agricultural production. Anglo South-Africans, for instance, who were among the less affluent to settle in Kenya, represented only 14% of the white population in 1931, against 20% ten years earlier.[56] With a balance of migrations close to zero for most of the 1920s and 1930s, natural growth, estimated at around 6% a year, was the only factor supporting the extension of Kenya's white population. The high turnover of migrants created a gap between the rich who were able to sustain their farm in the long run, and the more numerous settlers whose stay in Kenya was precarious and eventually short-lasting: in 1931, 72% of the settlers were in the colony for less than 10 years. This also solidified the grasp of the "big men" over Kenya's politics and settlers' society.

Despite their differences, several dynamics contributed to unite settlers in terms of political claims, social habits and cultural pretensions. This happened through a twofold process of exclusion and assimilation. First, the articulation of middle-class culture and racial privilege led to the increasing exclusion of the poorer segments of the European population. Poor whites had been a constant concern for Kenya's authorities. They were worried, in particular, about Afrikaners. A segregated, impoverished community, they remained largely isolated from the English-speaking population, despite representing, in the early 1920s, a fifth of the colony's whites.[57]A great number of them were landless, staying as squatters on unoccupied farms, leaving of poaching or offering their services

55. V. Harlow and E. M. Chilver, *History of East Africa, II* (Oxford University Press, 1960), 209-264; Van Zwanenberg and King, *An Economic History of Kenya and Uganda, 1800-1970*, 37-39.

56. Berman, *Control & Crisis in Colonial Kenya. The Dialectic of Domination*, 130-131.

57. Kennedy, *Islands of the White. Settlers Society in Kenya and Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1939*, 25-27.

KENYAN BALANCE OF EUROPEAN MIGRATION, 1923-1938

Year	*Immigrants*	*Emigrants*	*Balance*
1923	3430	3374	56
1924	4079	3236	843
1925	4951	3844	1107
1926	6058	4648	1410
1927	6301	5044	1257
1928	6676	5564	1112
1929	6946	5998	948
1930	7268	7025	243
1931	5716	5703	13
1932	4634	4439	195
1933	?	?	
1934	4996	4923	73
1935	5387	5318	69
1936	5630	5582	48
1937	6255	5867	388
1938	6932	6086	846

Table 4: Colonial Office, *The migrations were recorded at Mombasa Harbour, and did not differentiate those who stayed in Kenya from those who moved further to Tanganyika and Uganda. However, a few complementary statistics, which exists only for a couple of years, allows us to estimate that roughly 84% of these migration fluxes concerned Kenyan settlers.Dane K. Kennedy,* Islands of the White. Settlers Society in Kenya and Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1939 *(Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1987), 195.*

LENGTH OF RESIDENCE OF EUROPEANS IN KENYA, 1931

Years of residence	*Europeans*
1-5	7 207
6-10	3 402
11-15	1 820
16-20	1 805
21-25	772
26-30	272
31-35	80
36-40	9
41-45	4
46-50	1

Table 5: Colonial Office, *Annual Report on the Social and Economic Progress of the People of Kenya Colony and Protectorate, 1933, Colonial Report No. 1688*, London:1934

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for housing and subsistence in European estates.[58] The Kenya government led several campaigns to evict them, seemingly without much success.

The fear of poor whites also drove some provisions of the Soldiers Settlement Scheme,

58. Gerrit Groen, "The Afrikaners in Kenya. 1903-1969" (Doctoral dissertation, History, Michigan State University, 1974); Duder and Youé, "Paice's Place: Race and Politics in Nanyuki District, Kenya, in the 1920s."

while reserving a number of small farms, sized below 300 acres, to Anglo South Africans who had fought in Kenya under the British flag. Poorer elements thus settled under this scheme, while it was thought that the provision of land would ward them off from indigence. In the wake of the scheme, the Kenya Government also implemented stricter controls on immigration to assure newcomers to the colony had enough capital and skills to survive without support from the state. The economic crisis of the 1930s accentuated these policies. Probation periods and a deposit to cover the possibility of a repatriation were imposed on new migrants, while up to several dozens of deportations a year dealt with the poorer whites.[59] Several voluntary bodies also cared for the poor, especially children and vagrants, and more generally to assist in the repatriation of those who had to leave Africa. Founded in Kenya in the early 1920s by female settlers and often working on behalf of the government, the League of Mercy and the Salvation Army acted as patronage organizations for the less well-off.[60] They ran hostels for the poor and an employment office in Nairobi.[61] These measures prevented the formation of a significant group of white indigents. Besides these initiatives, settlers leaders also supported the migration of people "of the right sort". The Convention of Associations put in place a system called pupillage, through which a settler could sponsor one of his relatives to come to Kenya and train on his farm before settling on his own. This was a way to increase settlers' numbers through family ties, ensuring those who came had the right pedigree. In 1932, the Convention also formed the Kenya Association, an independent body which sought to attract to Kenya ex-administrators and officers, using pamphlets to promote Kenya as a ideal retirement place for independent gentlemen. These initiatives contributed to giving Kenya the image of a public-schoolboy colony, to which even the many poor land-owners of upcountry Kenya seem to have adhered.

In fact and in spite of their precarious material conditions, white farmers never saw themselves as "poor whites". For the average settler poverty meant the impossibility of fulfilling middle class ideals, rather than being merely indigent. Land guaranteed independence, and thus poverty meant, above all, being landless. Its definition was as much cultural as it was economic, since settlement in Kenya was for the greater part an "uneconomic phenomenon", driven by social aspirations rather than mere profit.[62]

While the landless Europeans were marginalized and excluded, their own failures united white farmers.In rural Kenya, this brought together groups which would not have mixed easily in England. Aristocrats and middle-class aspirants were not, at first sight, of comparable status and fortune. Yet it seems that in the rural settlements of the Rift

59. Nicholls, *Red Strangers. The White Tribe of Kenya*, 182; Kennedy, *Islands of the White. Settlers Society in Kenya and Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1939*, 73.

60. *Kenya Gazette*, 25 March 1930.

61. Nicholls, *Red Strangers. The White Tribe of Kenya*, 137.

62. Berman, *Control & Crisis in Colonial Kenya. The Dialectic of Domination*, 131, 133-134; Leys, *The Colour Bar in East Africa*; also quoted in Duder and Youé, "Paice's Place: Race and Politics in Nanyuki District, Kenya, in the 1920s," 262.

Valley they mixed quite easily; in Nanyuki for instance, a butcher and an Earl's son could well entertain together. The circumstances of colonization seemingly led to a levelling of class hierarchies. Common labour, it has been argued, and the produce of the same public-school culture that all upper-class Britons shared greatly helped.[63] Yet, other factors can explain such a phenomenon. Besides their respective social origins and occupations, the farmers of upcountry Kenya were tied together by the uncertainty of their condition, which drove common behaviours. They feared the degenerating effects of the tropical sun; they wore spine-pads and pith helmets accordingly, and erected shadowy stone houses, in the "tropical gothic" style of Sir Herbert Baker.[64] Their racial privileges were always at threat, never fully endorsed by Whitehall. These fears were further amplified by the fact that they were never more than a small minority compared with the other races. The relative isolation of upcountry settlers furthered the self-protecting attitude and "reactionary populism" that drove their political claims.[65] It also led rural settlers to think about themselves as a community of interests and purposes, hostile to Nairobi administrators but heavily dependent on the state's subsidies, whose cultural pretensions were increasingly out of touch with the darker reality of their economic situation.

V. Native Labour and Racial Violence

Inexperienced in farming and breeding, enjoying a lifestyle they could hardly afford, settlers relied heavily on native labour. The particular configuration of labour on European farms answered two constraints: First, the land settlers owned exceeded their capacity to exploit it; second, they did not generate enough cash to employ wage labour. The solution was to recruit squatters: Africans were given grazing and cultivating rights on settlers' farms in exchange for labour. This was, at first, an attractive condition for many Africans, who found in this arrangement better living conditions than those in the reserves. However, settlers' increasing need for cheap labour led them to pressure the colonial administration for more coercive regulations. This was answered by two set of laws that regulated African employment. First was a series of Masters and Servants Ordinances, which increased the level of administrative coercion over native labour. All African males over the age of 15 were required to register with an administrative officer, and to wear at all times a sort of passport called *kipande*, on which was recorded their employment history and their moves inside and outside the reserves. Furthermore, the laws limited native rights to join and leave employment, while infringements were rated as

63. Duder and Youé, "Paice's Place: Race and Politics in Nanyuki District, Kenya, in the 1920s," 268; Kennedy, *Islands of the White. Settlers Society in Kenya and Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1939*, 183.

64. Kennedy, *Islands of the White. Settlers Society in Kenya and Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1939*, 110-127.

65. Anderson, "Sexual Threat and Settler Society: "Black Perils" in Kenya, c. 1907-30"; Anderson, "Punishment, Race and "The Raw Native": Settler Society and Kenya's Flogging Scandals, 1895-1930."

crime. These coercive regulations were supplemented in 1918 by a Resident Native Labour Ordinance, which denied squatters their rights as tenants and increased the compulsory duration of labour.[66] The peculiar configuration of forced labour on settlers' farms shaped European relationships to Africans. This could be defined as a sort of forced patronage, driven by a combination of paternalistic affection and ruthless violence.

Clubs reflected such relationship. If membership was exclusively reserved for individuals of pure European descent, as all activities they employed native servants. All clubs needed African staff, at least for the running of the bar and the maintenance of the sports pitches. It was a cheap solution, even if the wealthiest clubs in Nairobi, with a large membership, could afford Goans or even Somalis to cater at their premises. In Nairobi, Muthaiga could afford "impeccable domestics, or 'boys' however aged, in tasselled tarbooshes, red cardinals' cummerbunds encircling ample white cotton robes or *Kanzus*[67], the head waiters with braided bolero jackets, all silent on shiny, scrubbed balletic feet, swoopingly alert to every call for service.[68]" The number of staff members greatly varied, but they were often at least a dozen, taking care of the food, the bar, the sports grounds and the overall maintenance of the establishment. Twenty-five staff members, including four for the bar, were on average required to serve the 200 members of the Thomson Falls Country Club.[69] There were bar boys and pantry boys, "kitchen totos[70]", "ball boys" for the tennis courts, all infantile denominations, usual in settlers' domestic spheres. They marked the castrating condescension of their masters; masculinity too was racialized.

The debate around alcohol licences reflected this condescending dependence. Officials in charge of native affairs, supported by missionaries, were of the opinion that being exposed to alcohol would lead natives to degeneration. The employment of African barmen and waiters was therefore prohibited in hotels and bars. Yet clubs as private places were exempted from liquor licenses, which meant that they were allowed to hire native servants, who cost far less than Asian or European staff.[71] Furthermore, as voluntary associations, they sold drinks at cost. From the early 1930s, as the economic crisis struck the colony, the East African Hotel Keepers Association started to complain that clubs were unfair competitors and should be subjected to licenses. This measure was eventually voted by the LegCo in 1934, providing both hotels and clubs would be authorized to hire African barmen.[72] If its undercurrents were largely economic, the debate on the liquor bill, which was supported by all LegCo members but two, revealed the racial prejudices on which

66. Bruce Berman and John Lonsdale, *Book One: State & Class*, vol. 1 of *Unhappy Valley* (London, Nairobi and Athens (OH): James Currey, Heinemann Kenya / Ohio University Press, 1992), 101-126.

67. A white-coloured tunic.

68. Terence Gavaghan, *Of Lions and Dung Beetles. A "Man in the Middle" of Colonial Administration in Kenya* (Ifracombe: Arthur H. Stockwell, 1999), 29.

69. According to various figures given in RHO Mss Afr.s.1580, History of the Thomson Falls Country Club III.

70. A "kitchen kaffir" derivation from the Swahili "mtoto", a child.

71. Willis, *Potent Brews. A Social History of Alcohol in East Africa, 1850-1999*, 166-168.

72. *Kenya Legislative Council, 15-12-1934, Kenya National Assembly Official Record (Hansard)*, 1934.

clubs lay. A. C. Tannahill, the member for Nairobi, so expressed:

> […]in regard to native barmen I do happen to have had control of a small club bar and the native barman who is employed is a man who has had his character very critically examined and by ordinary methods his work is controlled and examined very very carefully, so that it is almost impossible for that native to get away with the club liquor.
>
> […]
>
> The point of a members' club is, of course, that it is members who have banded themselves together so that they may meet and incidentally –quite incidentally– obtain a drink when they want it. We made very exhaustive enquiries and believe there is not one single members' club in Kenya where drinking is the main object. We believe it is in every case merely the subsidiary object –the main objects are generally sports and recreation; drink is a very minor point indeed. […]The argument was put forward that the club was competing with the licensed dealer. Of course, Sir, that is quite wrong. If you carry that to its logical conclusion we ought not to give a dinner party because we are possibly competing with the hotel which provides for dinner parties. The thing is monstrous if individuals cannot arrange to meet together and provide facilities for such a meeting and the necessary liquid refreshment !.[73]

The degree of familiarity involved with sports and leisure justified the existence of associations from which Asians were banned as peers, but where Africans were welcomed to work provided they were the subject of a paternalistic and authoritarian supervision.

This supervision could turn violent. Tannahill himself, a fine golfer and the chairman of the Nairobi Golf Club in the 1920s, was once the object of a poem which was published in the Sunday Post newspaper, on the occasion of a rhyme competition. Beyond the polite condescension of parliamentary debates, it reflected the harshness of race relations with caddies on the golf course:

> Grinty[74], smiting at the first[75]
> Killed his caddy
> -how he cursed'
> And his grief was loud and wordy
> Now he couldn't get a Birdie[76]
> But by a colossal fluke,
> His ball was teed up on the Kyuke[77]

73. Second Reading, The Liquor Bill, Kenya Legislative Council, Kenya National Assembly Official Record (Hansard), Saturday, 15th December 1934, pp. 1027-1028.

74. Tannahill's nickname.

75. Understand, "at the first hole."

76. In golf a Birdie means scoring one under par at a given hole.

77. Pejorative nickname for Kikuyu.

So he sank his usual bogey[78]
Off the chest of dead Jeroge[7980]

Besides the course, violence towards African servants was usual and the beating and flogging of employees reached an extent probably unknown in other colonies.[81] Arnold Paice, an official at the Nanyuki Sports Club, complaining about the "insolence and indolence" of the natives, told his mother that "if a negro didn't like you he girded his loins and ran right away & you never saw him again; if you didn't like him (don't tell any of those funny people in Parliament) you probably gave him what is commonly called a 'thick bar' and you certainly sacked him on the spot".[82] The occasional murders which resulted were only punished by all-white courts on very rare occasions.[83] Although archives left very few testimonies of such cases, the poem itself reflected clubs' specific style of enunciation of social issues. It euphemized the sordidness of labour relations into poetry and irony; the harshest racial violence was translated into puns; the accidental murder of a native mattered no more than a no-less-accidental sporting prowess.

Domestic violence towards Africans was driven by a wider context. The violence of labour extraction, for which they constantly sought the support of field administrators, and the fragility of their privilege led settlers to become paranoiac about the "raw natives". They feared a rebellion and the "black peril" of their unrestrained sexuality.[84] They successfully pushed for the passing of capital punishment as a sanction for rape against white women, which was effective from 1926, and advocated in favour of the flogging of African criminals. These measures emphasized the need to violently assert white authority over native societies while whites were fully aware of the fragility of their domination.

VI. Rural Kenya : A Community of Aspirations

Although it is hard to assess the exact number of European clubs in rural Kenya, they were at least twenty-seven in the 1920s, as many as the Planters and Farmers Associations; that is to say one club for every 81 farmers in 1926. This is further confirmed by membership lists, which gathered on average 80 to 100 names.[85] By the 1930s, secondary sources and personal memoirs often mention clubs as the centre of European social life in the upcountry

78. A bogey means scoring one over-par at a given hole.
79. Here for Njoroge, a common Kikuyu name
80. RHO Mss Brit. Emp. 524, The Memoirs of Robin Wainwright, Vol.I, p.53.
81. Anderson, "Punishment, Race and "The Raw Native": Settler Society and Kenya's Flogging Scandals, 1895-1930."
82. Arnold Paice to his mother, 17/12/1926, RCMS 178/1/21-33 Paice papers Box 3.
83. Patrick Collinson, "The Cow Bells of Kitale," *London Review of Books* 25, no. 11 (2003): 15–20.
84. Kennedy, *Islands of the White. Settlers Society in Kenya and Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1939*, 110-127; Anderson, "Sexual Threat and Settler Society: "Black Perils" in Kenya, c. 1907-30"; Anderson, "Punishment, Race and "The Raw Native": Settler Society and Kenya's Flogging Scandals, 1895-1930."
85. See for instance KNA 128, Songhor Sports Club: Register of Members; Eldoret Sports Club: Rules & Bye-Laws, as revised to 31st December 1929.

locations of the colony. This was because rural Kenya was a country of little parishes, distant from each others in a colony where communications were slow and difficult. Farms, too, were large and scattered. In inter-war Kenya, clubs were often the only place where settlers could entertain themselves, play sports or find a library. As Michael Blundell remembered, in 1929, a few years after he had settled in the colony as an assistant farm manager on pupillage, "every district had a small club which provided a social centre for the farmers who on their large farms would see no fellow European for a week or more".[86]

Most rural clubs were members' clubs, which meant they belonged to their members, and not to a company or a single owner, which in the colony was an exception only found in Muthaiga and Mombasa clubs. Collective ownership fostered a strong participative culture. Until the 1940s, most golf courses, cricket pitches and polo fields, as well as all kinds of premises were funded and built by the settlers themselves, under the patronage of the wealthiest. According to committee minutes, fund-raisings to erect a new building, a tennis pavilion, to organize a kids' party or a Christmas tree were prominent occasions. They lasted for several months. In smaller clubs, each event, celebration or game fuelled this participative culture. A member gave a gramophone, others offered tables and chairs, some curtains or a billiard, a trophy for the tournaments, sometimes trees and flowers. Most often, trophies were given and presented to the club by the members themselves. On a wider scale, Koru Club's golf course was a personal loan from a member's plot, until years later he eventually decided to take it back.[87]

Clubs' participative culture eventually accompanied the rituals that celebrated settlers' allegiance to the Empire. Coronation and Royal Jubilees were honoured. When in 1935 George V marked his Silver Jubilee, Gilgil settlers gave a two-day-long celebration, with a tennis tournament and a golf competition, a tea and children's games; trees were planted to mark the occasion. These days ended with a sundowner and a dance. At night, settlers lighted a beacon to illuminate the Wanjohi Valley.[88] In 1935, the Thomson Falls Country Club organized its opening party on the King's birthday, *a very suitable day* as this was "a double occasion to celebrate".[89]

Sports and dances were similarly celebrated as a mark of civilization over a rough, inhospitable land. Arnold Paice, in 1926 the secretary of the Nanyuki Sports Club, so wrote to his mother at the occasion of the annual race meeting:

> It sometimes seems so queer to me at these meetings to think that about the same spot where there is now a very good race course and polo ground with

86. Michael Blundell, *A Love Affair With the Sun. A Memoir of Seventy Years in Kenya* (Nairobi: Kenway Publications, 1994), p.13; this is also recalled in his personal journal, were much of his spare time was spent playing tennis at the club, see: RHO MSS. Afr. s. 746, Box 1, Michael Blundell: First Few Weeks Only in Kenya 1925.

87. "Minutes of a Committee Meeting held at Koru Club on 19th February 1952 at 5pm.", KNA MSS 128/41 Koru Club.

88. Minutes of a committee meeting, 24/03/1935, KNA MSS 128/32, Gilgil Country Club.

89. Mss. Afr. s. 1540, History of the Thomson Falls Country Club I, 1938-64.

Figure 1: King George V Silver Jubilee Celebrations, Nyeri Club (1935). Unknown author, album of family photographs taken in Kenya, 1934-1936, Royal Commonwealth Society, Cambridge.

> large dance hall, bar, stabling and various other buildings one used to wander round when I first came to these parts, looking for buffalo, rhino or lion. Now-a-days one sees a big crowd at these shows, people from Nairobi and all over the place. At the dances, 40 to 60 couples & of course both sexes in evening dress. During the day the ladies are all very beautiful in their best frocks.[90]

Games and sports were predominant, and socialized all to gentlemanly culture. Polo, for instance, seems to have been a practice less elitist in Kenya than it was elsewhere in the Empire. The sport had been practised in the colony since 1905, but really expanded after the war, with the coming of retired officers from the Indian Army. They started most of the clubs and trained settlers to play the game. In the early 1920s, polo became the most popular game in the colony, with grounds and teams in Nairobi, Makuyu, Njoro, Nyeri, Naivasha, then Gilgil, Nanyuki, Meru, Machakos and Lumbwa.[91] Polo was played every weekend and contested in local competitions which were major events in the social life of a district. Eight cups took place during the nine months of a sports season, and were extensively commented in the press. For several days, sometimes an entire week, they gathered teams from the whole colony. This success was owed to the fact that polo was less expensive in Kenya than it was in Great Britain.[92] As a journalist wrote in 1923:

> In England, polo is considered the game of the wealthy *par excellence*, and

90. Arnold Paice to his mother, March 11th 1926, RCMS 178/1/21-33 Paice papers, Box 3.

91. Excerpt from *The Field*, September 1922, RHO MSS. Afr. S. 2154, Huxley Papers, Box 26, "Notes about polo".

92. Lord Bertram Francis Cranworth, *A Colony in the Making: or, Sports and Profit in British East Africa* (London: MacMillan / Co., 1912), 331-333.

> though this opinion is undoubtedly correct, the great mistake made by the new settler in this respect is that he unthinkingly assumes the same to be the case in Kenya. "Oh no, I can't afford to play polo", oy will hear him say, "I'm not one of the idle rich. I came to this country to work, and polo costs far too much for me. Perhaps, when the coffee is in bearing…". A certain amount of thought will convince anyone that polo costs less out here, probably than anywhere else in the world, and that the expense is comparatively negligible. In few places can so much fun be had for so little money.[93]

Country-bred Arab ponies were cheap, although the richest players imported South African, Abyssinian and Somali mounts. The practice of polo was more inclusive than it was in Great Britain. Each week in 1923 the *East African Standard* had a column explaining the "do's and don'ts" of the game, with advice on the training of ponies. Tournaments brought together players of all levels. For instance in Makuyu, 80 kilometres north of Nairobi, the polo week organized for the opening of the hunting season seems to have been extremely popular, with several hundreds of participants from the central part of the White Highlands. Although Nyeri and Makuyu engaged two teams each, and Nairobi and the Rift were also represented, several teams were formed on the spot for *ad hoc* oppositions: married against single, officials against settlers, old versus young or between different banks. Many players were inexperienced, with a negative handicap. Along with polo, a match of cricket was played between Thika District settlers and officials of the Kenya Polo Association, while a tennis tournament gathered 30 players. At the end of each day, up to a hundred of couples congregated at a ball. Each settler location seems to have had its own polo week, from Nanyuki in February, to Nairobi twice a year. Polo tournaments were also played during larger events, like the yearly Nairobi race weeks, which were organised by the East African Turf Club. The whole settlers community was expected to converge on the Nairobi race course, for a week of almost uninterrupted partying.

Sports which in Great Britain were associated with the wealthy were in Kenya part of a wider settler culture. Golf, in the 1930s, presented the same inclusive, assimilative dimension. In 1936, for its golf section alone, the Thomson Falls Country Club organised 13 inter-club cups, four quarterly spoons, a *wazee* versus *watoto* match, in addition to the Coronation Cup.[94] These festive matches which confronted different social identities actually reinforced settlers' racial identity, as the joyful display of professional, generational and marital differences strengthened the awareness of racial belonging.[95]

93. *Kenya Observer*, 22-01-1923, RHO MSS Afr.s 2154, Huxley Papers, Box 26, Notes About Polo.

94. Old men versus youngsters, in Swahili. RHO MSS Afr. s. 1540, History of the Thomson Falls Country Club, vol. I.

95. In a configuration that one can describe, following Louis Dumont, as an "encompassing of the contraries". For the anthropologist, each apparent contradiction within the same system reveals a hierarchical relation. Where there is opposition at an inferior level, there is unity at a greater level; contradictions become complementary Louis Dumont, *Homo Hierarchicus. The Caste System and Its Implications* (The University of Chicago Press, 1980), 245-246.

Gentlemanly patronage played a great role in realizing such apparent unity. As for institutions, tournaments and teams were everywhere funded and organized by the higher echelons of settler society. Polo had been supported by aristocrats from the beginning; Berkeley Cole, the son of the 4th Earl of Enniskillen, an Anglo-Irish aristocrat, had started the Nairobi Polo Club in 1909, of which he remained the Secretary. The Connaught Cup, the colony's most regular polo event, had been presented by the Duke of Connaught during his first visit to Kenya in 1909. Although they instilled their own class ethos in the game, polo became a popular sport among the whites after the War, giving rise to a wide variety of practices among the wider European community. The type of mounts ranged from donkey to expensive horses while the standards of playing and earnestness of competitions could vary greatly . Despite these differences, regional sports events and inter-club tournaments produced a link between all settlers and a feeling of obligation toward those who patronised them. Polo competitions became the most important social events in the colony, which one could not miss, especially settlers' leaders whose support and patronage were expected. Major General Wheatley, who was retained in Nairobi for a meeting during the Indian Crisis, so raged that "this [was] the second day of our Nanyuki Race Meeting and I c[ouldn't] be there".[96] L.A. Spiers, the chairman of the Njoro Settlers Association, similarly apologized that he could not attend the Joint Standing Committee of the Rift Valley Farmers' Associations, since he was "fully booked to assist in the opening of the Nakuru Golf Course during the whole of the afternoon", confident that other delegates would agree "that the Nakuru Golf Club fixture [was] rather an important one, in view of the fact that teams [were] visiting the District from Nairobi and Eldoret and that the town [was]looking for all the support it [could] get on the occasion".[97] Elite patronage channelled settlers' aspirations to gentlemanly culture, in an effort to align them with the highest cultural standards. These standards matched the nature of Kenya's wealthier elite. Yet they differed form elite standards in Great Britain. For instance, leisure was rarely of intellectual nature, as compared to South Africa for instance, where many scientific societies and literary clubs existed.[98]

Most of the time, despite their leaders' patronage and goodwill, the adjustment of settlers' lifestyles with their social aspirations was hindered by the indigence and penury of the majority. In his memoirs, C.F. Anderson relates that in the late 1920s, in the Transnzoia District, "everyone was so hard up that we had to make our own amusements. There used to be a monthly gramophone dance at the small Elgon Club, about 12 miles

96. Philip Wheatley to his father, 16-02-1923, RHO MSS Afr. s. 799, Letters to and From Philip Wheatley, 21-12-1919 to 28-02-1923.

97. L.A Spiers to Hon. Secretary, Joint Standing Committee, Rift Valley Constituency, 11-01-1929, RHO MSS. Afr. s.1506, Box 1:3, Njoro Settlers Association, Joint Standing Committee Correspondence.

98. Kenya's only intellectual society, the East Africa Natural History Society, was founded by missionaries of the Church Mission Society, while the first public library was only established as late as 1931. By contrast, on "intellectual" dining clubs in South Africa see for instance Rosenthal, *The Third Tuesday. A History of the Owl Club, 1951-1981.*

away, at which everyone brought their own sandwiches and beer or whisky, which was cheap then, so that we got our entertainment for virtually nothing".[99] Members were often indebted. In most establishments, consumptions were paid on short-term credit: each bill was registered on a personal account, which was to be settled each month. Club rules requested members' financial discipline, but this was not enough to ensure proper repayment. Committees' minutes display a multitude of arrangements for members in need, including instalments, along with the somewhat vain injunctions for the club subscriptions to be paid in due time.[100] Quite often a club's banker was also a member, allowing the institution to continue to exist with outstanding debts, especially before the registration of a chartered accountant was made compulsory by the law. C.F. Anderson "remember[ed]going to an emergency meeting of the Kitale Club at which it had to be decided whether or not the club should close down through lack of funds. At the meeting the Bank manager, who like everyone else was a member, agreed to carry on the overdraft for another six months".[101] Facing crisis and poverty, sellers' distinctive culture, as a consequence, became a paradoxical combination of pretension and decay.

VII. A Bureaucratization of Weak Ties

Clubs had become extremely popular after the Great War, while sports, shifting from hunting to polo, tennis and golf, were increasingly played in association with these institutions. Despite their centrality in a township's social life, the rhythm of such sociability was rather slow. Most farmers lived in relative isolation and only came to town once in a week or less, to deliver agricultural goods, buy subsistence provisions or collect mail. Club life, therefore, mostly happened on week-ends, when meetings, sports tournaments, barbecue parties and dances were held. In the larger towns such as Eldoret of Nakuru, clubs proposed a "country membership" for those who resided beyond a five-mile radius of the establishment; these clubs were often residential, offering rooms or cottages to accommodate their visiting members.

Yet membership bonds were more substantial than mere occasional, leisure ties. Clubs concentrated several social amenities, before an independent business or service appeared. As Blundell recalls, in what became the colony's third most-populated city, in the late 1920s "Nakuru [was]then a small town with a single short main street, the railway station and a small road which led to the Rift Valley Sports Club, the centre of much social life. There was no hairdresser for men and a haircut was obtained by mentioning it to Lopez, the barman at the Club".[102] Clubs housed professional and political gatherings, charity

99. RHO MSS Afr. s. 1653, C.F. Anderson: Reminiscences, p.30
100. See for instance, among many others cases: Minutes of a Committee Meeting of Koru Club held on Saturday 27th August 1938 at 3.15 p.m., KNA MSS 128/40, Koru Club.
101. RHO MSS Afr. s. 1653, *op. cit.*, p.30.
102. Blundell, *A Love Affair With the Sun. A Memoir of Seventy Years in Kenya*, 19.

events and welcomed church services, around a portable altar.[103] They were the centre of a wide net of associations, to which most settlers belonged.[104]

Moreover, the great majority of rural clubs were used as a meeting place for the local Districts, farmers or planters associations. These institutions were intimately linked; quite often they were a reciprocal emanation. For instance, the Lumbwa Farmers Association formed the local club; the reverse was true in Njoro.[105] Turbo-Kipkarren, Nanyuki, Koru, Lumbwa, Njoro, Nandi, Gilgil farmers, planters or settlers associations met at their respective local club.[106] The lists of members of a rural club included the great majority of the adherents of a local farmers' association. The same were usually those who were registered with the local agricultural cooperative, the European Association, the Arts and Crafts Society or the branch of the East Africa Women's League.[107] Club members, therefore, were more than mere acquaintances. Their relationships were weak ties, that is to say not necessarily affectionate or committed, but regular and to a certain extent necessary. They were the result of economic or professional cooperation, and, in a pattern peculiar to colonization, an emanation of settlers' common social aspirations and racial segregation.

These ties did not rule out the social hierarchies, status and identities that divided settlers. The circumstances of rural settlement brought closer aristocrats and the upper-middle classes, but many Anglo-South Africans, for instance, were just too far on the social ladder to allow any familiarity. Direct evidence of conflicts and social distance is scarce for rural areas, since most memoirs were written by the upper echelons of settler society who simply ignored the less privileged and tended to insist on racial unanimity. Furthermore, most elections were, as regards to class issues, apolitical, and seats often went uncontested; farmers, traders and professionals all seemed to agree that the public-school men and large landowners were their best representatives.[108] However, while Lord Bertram Francis Gurdon, 2nd baron Cranworth, stated that in Kenya "as in older colonies

103. Blundell, *A Love Affair With the Sun. A Memoir of Seventy Years in Kenya*, p.19, on Church services in clubs see also : KNA MSS 128/32, Gilgil Club Minutes.

104. This is also noticed by: Berman, *Control & Crisis in Colonial Kenya. The Dialectic of Domination*, 138.

105. RHO Mss. Afr. s. 614, Lumbwa Farmers Association and RHO Mss. Afr. s. 1506, Njoro Settlers Association. The proximity between clubs and professional associations is further testified by the fact that their respective archives often come from the same donations.

106. To take only a few among many examples, see: Minutes of the Turbo-Kipkarren Association held at Turbo Club, 1928-1963, RHO Mss. Afr. s. 881, Papers of the Turbo-Kipkarren Association; Meetings of the Nanyuki Stockbreeders and Producers Association held in the Nanyuki Sports Club, Meetings of the Nanyuki Farmers Association, every year from 1929 onwards, to 1942, at least, DC NYK 3/1/8 Associations: Nanyuki Farmers Association; Minutes of the Meetings of the Koru Farmers Association, KNA MSS 128/30 Koru Farmers Association Minutes Book; Meetings of the Njoro Settlers Association held at Njoro Club, from 1928 onwards, see: RHO MSS Afr. s. 1506 Njoro Settlers Association; Minutes of a Committee Meeting held on Sunday Oct.31st 1937, KNA MSS 128/32 Gilgil Country Club.

107. This phenomenon is attested by the similarities between the membership lists of all voluntary associations in a given locality. See for instance KNA MSS 128/39-40 Koru Club, List of Members, and MSS 128/30 Koru Farmers Association.

108. Kennedy, *Islands of the White. Settlers Society in Kenya and Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1939*, 182.

there [was]no class distinction", he still mentioned that public-schoolboys hailed "from Eton downward".[109] And in ex-soldiers locations such as Nanyuki, ex-privates were irritated by ex-colonels "swanky and tactless" behaviours.[110] There are many indications that if settlement levelled down social differences, it did not eliminate competition, one-upmanship and snobbery within the white community.

Clubs most delicate task was therefore to preserve racial solidarity while regulating settlers' diversity. All presented a bureaucratic apparatus which fostered the adjustment of class differences and the avoidance of social conflicts. Recorded in a wide variety of documents, from constitutions and by-laws to suggestions books and golf cards, it presented a considerable corpus of impersonal rules, injunctions, committees, titles, all in sharp contrast with the expected informality of club practices. In 1930, Eldoret Club's 159 members were subjected to 74 rules and 24 bye-laws, dealing with all aspects of club life, from accounts and elections to fines applicable to members who would have brought their dogs on the tennis court.[111] These many rules, titles and procedures were all the more respected in that they were an emanation of a consenting community of members. They were given strength by the practice of voting and through the constant search for consensus. A democratic procedure, in which all full members had the right of vote, provided solutions to the tensions that addressed and divided the membership, thus strengthening its unity. C. F. Anderson, a medical administrative officer, recounted that in the early 1930s the Kiambu Club was "the centre of all social activity" in the district, gathering both government officers, their wives and the soldier-settlers who ran Kiambu's many coffee farms. On a morning, the club's wooden premises was found to have burnt accidentally:

> When it came to rebuilding the Club, a number of the members wanted it to be built on a new site from which there was a view of Mount Kenya. This would have meant putting a road of access across the third fairway of the golf course. Most of the members liked the old site. Feeling ran high, and as sometimes happens in a small community, a row developed and half of the members were not on speaking terms with the other half. In the end a vote was taken and the old site won. After that everyone was happy.[112]

The anecdote illustrates how voting united a membership which would otherwise have remained divided. Clubs' formalism tied farmers' communities. A striking example of this process is found in the way two members of the Nanyuki Sports Club settled a dispute at the occasion of the races:

> During the first Nanyuki races, in 1927, there was a boxing match arranged to settle a duel of some standing. The contestants were a farmer and the local

109. Cranworth, *A Colony in the Making: or, Sports and Profit in British East Africa*, 81.
110. Duder and Youé, "Paice's Place: Race and Politics in Nanyuki District, Kenya, in the 1920s," 260.
111. Eldoret Club, *Rules & Bye-Laws as Revised to 31st December 1929.*
112. RHO MSS Afr.s. 1653, Anderson: Reminiscences

> butcher. The butcher complained that the farmer's dogs were always stealing meat from his shop. When the butcher shot one of the dogs, honour had to be satisfied. Bloodshed was prevented by someone having the brilliant idea that funds might be raised for the building of a clubhouse. He persuaded the pair to have their fight staged under Rules, and to charge a fee for spectators. Everything was done in the most punctilious manner.[…]Neither of the pair knew the first thing about boxing. Nevertheless, they both went into strict training, the butcher taking the affair so seriously that he was seen by a neighbour's wife one morning, running round the racecourse. The fight went on, until the farmer went down, then the par shook hands and were accorded a hearty vote of thanks for their services to the club.[113]

Clubs provided many avenues for their members to democratically dispute over trivial issues, during general meetings and through "suggestions" written and signed for in a dedicated book, backed or not by other members. Suggestion books, for instance, allowed the members to denounce behaviours they disliked and to criticize the action of the committee. Indeed, these protests mainly dealt with petty things and mediocre incidents. However, suggestion books provided an opportunity for any member to express his irritation with the committee in a domesticated, controlled way. Members' cohesion was produced by these many debates over trivial issues: they developed a feeling of community and a climate of constant mediation and conflict avoidance. This also fostered an endless production of rules and committees. Arnold Paice, a Nanyuki farmer who held several official positions at the local club during the 1920s and 1930s wrote to his mother in 1932 in exasperation about his recent appointment on the tennis committee :

> I suppose it's the same in all clubs, a good deal of grousing. Some want things this way & some that and continual yap, yap, yap. I thought it a wise move to get one of these, the most chronic grouser of the lot to work on the sub-committee; so now he has to try and <u>do</u> something and take a bit of grousing from others ! I think committees are really rather a mistake. What one needs is a sort of Mussolini to run a club and [?]say "now this is this & that is that & if you don't like it you can do the other thing." It would save such a lot of time and breath.[114]

To a certain extent, bureaucracy became a style of sociability, an end in itself, sometimes to the point of being frustrating and inefficient for those who ran the clubs.

At the top of clubs' bureaucratic apparatus was a managing committee which mediated all issues and prevented the direct expression of conflicts between the members. Troubles were quickly diluted in ellipses and understatements, an intertwining of friendly advices and referrals to impersonal rules; sometimes conflicting identities were pacified through sports contests. In most cases, there was more discussion and emphasis put on how an offence could have been qualified as regards to rules, than on what had concretely

113. RHO MSS Afr.s 917, C.T. Todd: *Kenya Red Sunset*, p.135-137.
114. Arnold Paice to his mother, 4th September 1932, RCMS 178/1/1/10 Paice Papers, Box 3.

happened. Rules and committee's injunctions smoothed over antagonisms, reminding members how paramount it was to keep the club free of open, lasting dissensions.

The committee minutes that are available suggest that minor offences, which were kept internal to the membership, were quite common. They were dealt with at the discretion of the committee, without attracting further comments. Officials knew most of their membership well; they would write personally, in the style of friendly or intimate advice, in order to deal with a club *shauri* or to call back a member to the ranks.[115] An exchange of letters between the woman in charge of Njoro Club's House Committee and an ordinary member fully illustrates this process. The official was concerned by an issue which had taken place at the occasion of the club's Sunday barbecue, and which bar "boys" reported:

> [On] Sunday when there was a Mixed Grill – Sausages, kidneys &c. and you took one sausage, kidney &c. for yourself, and put two sausages on the Dog's Plate for the Dog.
>
> This cannot be allowed, and the Dog's Plate must not be brought into the Club. We do not cater for Dogs, but I do not think there would be any objection to your boy cooking some food for your Dog in the Club Kitchen, (you to supply the food.) If this is done, the food must be cooked between the Club meals, and not when the Club cook is busy with the Residents meals.

The day after, the incriminated member, Miss H. Sutherland, replied:

> In the happy days of yore when I had my meals in my own cottage, I was in the habit of giving that portion of any meal I had to my dog, as I very often did not want all that was provided – as only my own portion came into the cottage I could, of course do what I liked with it – and no one was the any the worse, expect perhaps the boys who may probably have looked on my 'leavings' as their 'pickings'!
>
> [...]
>
> However, far be it from me to make complications – especially in connection with the Club whose smooth running and welfare I have always had at heart. I will therefore avail myself of your suggestion, and get my boy to cook my dog's food, at some convenient time, in my own saucepan – and then I hope all will be well![116]

However trivial might have been the case, this exchange of letters illustrates some of the peculiarities of club sociability. Issues were dealt in an indirect way, always involving a third party: here the infantilized African staff, attracting little more consideration than a pet, who reported the case; and an official who blamed, to censure an offence as regards to expected standards. It is by using petty admonitions as regard to impersonal rules that clubs were able to closely tie their membership. They made personal relationships a

115. A *shauri* is an issue, in Kiswahili.

116. Mrs J. Kinsey to Miss H. Sutherland, 11-03-1941; and answer, 12-03-1941, RHO MSS Afr. s. 1506, Box 2:3, Njoro Settlers Association.

matter of rules and discipline, rather than an affair of affects and feelings. Formality and politeness were the minimal style of social exchange and mediation between members, allowing one to interact without committing too much or being too intimate. It provided codes to deal with any issue, and to prevent, as much as possible, a conflict to deteriorate too seriously.

Democratic culture bound the membership in a paradoxical way. Breaking a rule meant behaving against other members and therefore implied public reprobation. Yet permanent blame was rare. Definitive exclusions do not appear to have been common practice, since only a handful of such cases appears in the records; most were temporary. The moral qualification given to all infringements reveal the disciplinary effects of the associative web that embraced the whole colonial society. One should be clear about the concept of discipline: this was more a corrective mechanism that socialized settlers to the material culture of colonialism, to its peculiar style of sociability, and shaped bodies according to their dominant role.[117] Clubs did not punish and exclude; they rather measured and corrected the gap between individual behaviours and a social conformity that was to be pursued by all. Clubs and associations played a corrective role against behaviours that were considered marginal, weird or wicked, filling a lacuna left by the laws, infusing the "indefinite realm of non conformity".[118]

Given the slow rhythm of club sociability, such mechanism did not encompass all realms of social life, nor did it rule out status hierarchies. It only socialized settlers to the minimal requirements of racial solidarity, while regulating the expression of social differences. Its must obvious effect was to formalize degrees of integration and exclusion to settlers communities. They were assessed through individual reputations, albeit being defined according to seemingly insignificant criteria. The highlighting of petty personal glories and distinctions, of the most superficial traits, of sports handicaps, members' caricatures on the walls, the posting of names for a debt, an election or a result, the engraving of gilded-lettered boards of honours, the production and distribution of many trivial sports awards, all were practices that contributed to making a member unique, both measurable to others and responsible before them, within a moral community whose boundaries were clearly drawn, and in which each person had his own role, rank and place.

Clubs so formed a world of little nicknames. Years after she left the committee of the Thomson Falls Country Club, Jeannette Pierce fondly remembered "Daddy" Ryan, "Mac" McClellan, Leonard "Kinkles" King or Ernest "Barry" Barraclough.[119] She praised the company of the men with whom she had occupied official positions at the club for more than a decade; Thomson Falls, as many other establishments, was mostly run by the same clique that exchanged positions at each Annual General Meeting. This could well be a sign

117. For a notice on the concept of discipline in Foucault's work see: Jean-François Bayart, *Le gouvernement du monde. Une critique politique de la globalisation* (Paris: Fayard, 2004), 360-365.
118. Michel Foucault, *Surveiller et punir. Naissance de la prison* (Paris: Gallimard-Tel, 1975), 207.
119. RHO MSS afr. s. 1540, History of the Thomson Falls Country Club, 3 Vol.

of disinterest from other members. Yet this illustrates that clubs were managed by a few well-integrated people who set the tone of a township's communal life, while officials were often the same from one institution to another : the diversity of associations, Planters, Farmers and District Associations, the League of Mercy or the Arts and Crafts Society were often run by a same clique, like in Njoro or Nanyuki. And those who held these positions were often the long-standing, wealthier settlers, whose family background and education made them the best suited to these institutions. For instance, by the mid-1920s, the public-schoolboy Arnold Paice, who had been the first European to settle in Nanyuki fifteen years before, sat on the Nanyuki Farmers Association, the Stockbreeders Association, The Sports Club, the Township Committee, and was the Attesting Officer under the Resident native Ordinance, a position of trustee as regards to native squatters on European farms.[120] By contrast, those who were not "in" both social and professional circles had no opportunity to access positions of power and authority in the locality, and even more, at the colony scale.

VIII. Nairobi's Sociability

Figure 2: The Muthaiga Country Club a few months before its completion (1914) and the Nairobi Club, 1932. ©S. Mills personal collection, Nairobi.

In Nairobi as in rural Kenya club sociability was shaped by a tension between assimilation to racial standards and differentiation as regards to status. However, given the size and population of the capital, this tension led to the development of many institutions whose prestige reflected the status of their members. For civil servants "the two clubs were Nairobi Club and Parklands Club. The first was for 1st class officials and the second for junior 2nd class officials".[121] However from 1906, Parklands Sports Club had been more specifically the social hub of Nairobi's business community. The latter increasingly differed from rural settlers' radical views, especially the discrimination of Asians; in par-

120. Arnold Paice to his mother, 17/12/1926, RCMS 178/1/21-33 Paice papers Box 3.
121. RHO MSS. Afr. s. 1086, Nestor, Reminiscences, p.18.

ticular, they supported non-segregation in the city market.[122] As a whole, Nairobi left much more space for the expression of European class difference, in a way rarely observed upcountry where social hierarchies, through patronage, mostly had an assimilating effect.

The Muthaiga Country Club in particular carried a peculiar culture. It had been founded in response to the Nairobi Club, and more specifically in reaction to its official and austere ethos, which carried a scrupulous respect for orders of precedence and official hierarchies. To the contrary, Muthaiga was a place founded by last-born aristocrats and billionaires, the higher tier of settlers' society. The rhythm of its sociability was twofold: for the greater part of the year, it was patronized by idle aristocrats and remittance men, as well as American and European billionaires who came to Kenya on hunting trips. They soon came to be known, in both Europe and the colony, as the "Happy Valley set", known for its taste in debauchery and promiscuity. Besides this, on regular but one-off occasions such as Convention of Associations meetings, which were held at the club, or the bi-annual Nairobi races, Muthaiga's residential wings housed upcountry farmers. Ray Nestor, whose sister eventually married Muthaiga's secretary, mentions that the races attracted the settlers' elite and were comparable in fashion to Ascot and Longchamps; at this occasion he once met in Muthaiga the cousin of Churchill and the Duke of Marlborough over a game of bridge.[123] For these occasions the club was the favourite place for the likes of Delamere, Grogan and Scott. As regards to everyday life in rural Kenya, the races were a rare time of partying, laxity and licence.

As such, the Muthaiga Country Club developed a style of sociability of its own. The regular visitors made the club into an extravagant, ostentatious place, while the occasional races epitomized the combination of pretension and decay that had become standard upcountry. Little acts of vandalism were common; its night-long parties often degenerated. Karen Blixen famously related that "Muthaiga was always replacing its chandeliers and parties tended to degenerate towards dawn. Lord Delamere liked to shoot golf balls onto the roof, then climb out to retrieve them. Algy Cartwright shinnied up the pillars. Denys Finch Hatton would butt over armchairs like a bull and end up sitting on them".[124] When recalling Tich Miles, an adventurer and settler, "the life and soul of many parties", the writer Elspeth Huxley similarly points that "he had a parlour trick he often practiced at Muthaiga Club: he went all round the ballroom without touching the floor, swinging by his fingers from the cornice like a monkey". At another party, "Berkeley Cole announced that everyone was bathing at Trouville and every few minutes a large wave came and we had to hop over it".[125] In a collection of short stories on Kenya's whites, Nicholas Best

122. Godwin Rapando Murunga, "The Cosmopolitan Tradition and Fissures in segregationist town planning in Nairobi 1915-23," *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 6, no. 3 (2012): 463–486; Billy Kahora, ed., *Parlands Sports Club. Centennial Anniversary Edition* (Nairobi, 2006), 45.
123. RHO MSS. Afr. s. 1086, Nestor, Reminiscences, p.67.
124. Quoted in RHO Micr. afr. s. 595, C.O. Oates, History of the Muthaiga Country Club, p.24 and Stephen Mills, *Muthaiga. Vol I, 1913-60* (2007), 105.
125. Elspeth Huxley, *Out In the Midday Sun* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1987 [1985]), 170.

could write that "Muthaiga ha[d]probably seen more fornication than any other club of its kind in the world".[126]

In the pink-painted "Moulin Rouge of Africa", as it was then nicknamed – not only because of the building's colour, gramophones were thrown out of the windows, and one day the secretary woke up to find the dining room floor entirely covered with broken china.[127] The first visit of the Prince of Wales to Kenya marked a peak in such practices, and not the least because the Heir was offered cocaine during a diner intercourse. In the 1920s the committee chose to reform its rules in consequence, and deliberate breakages were then charged five times the price of the broken article, instead of two previously.[128] The collective practice of material violence and boisterous behaviours was eased by the configuration of the dining room, where a single table was laid, unifying the members around a diner taken in common.

These behaviours were not entirely exclusive to Kenya. Along with mentions of Trouville and other seaside resorts, to Ascot and Longchamps, settlers' elites imported to Kenya behaviours and references which were already peculiar to the European aristocracy. For young aristocrats in Britain the damaging of a pub or a club was somewhat customary. The Oxford Bullingdon Club, for instance, practised pub ransacking with complete repay of the damages, since at least the end of the 18th century, rooting these behaviours in the long, turbulent tradition of the bachelors of the British aristocracy. It was a mark of status, something they could afford both morally, as a prestigious name could survive such offence, and financially, as shame was avoided as long as members repaid for their mischief, on very generous terms. Damaging was one of the most prestigious proofs of one's independence.

In Kenya these nights of debauchery cost members a lot, and the ethos of munificence carried by the club made many indebted since all lived beyond their means. There were many outstanding accounts. It once threatened the club's survival: Muthaiga struggled with its accounts for the whole of 1920s and 1930s. The club was more than £50 000 in debts between 1928 and 1935.[129] Yet debts tied the members to the club, bound together by their extravagant lifestyle and their liabilities to the club's owner. Archibald Morrison, Muthaiga's proprietor, was quite liberal with his money, indulging members and offering

126. 104 Nicholas Best, *Happy Valley. the Story of the English in Kenya* (Londres: Secker & Warburg, 1979), also quoted in "White Highlanders", *The Spectator*, 6 July 1979, p.19.
127. Mills, *Muthaiga. Vol I, 1913-60*, 105.
128. RHO Micr. afr. s. 595, Titus Oates: History of the Muthaiga Country Club, p.24. Several clubs actually enforced such rules, but it does not seem that in provincial clubs the culture of breaking ever reached the degree it attained at Muthaiga. Rule 65 of the Eldoret Club stated that "any member breaking or damaging any of the property of the Club shall pay double the cost of the necessary repairs or replacement, unless the Committee is satisfied that the damage was done accidentally", as well as Mombasa Club and Thomson Falls, which charged up to three times any voluntary damages. It does not appear from the remaining archives that such rules had to be enforced in any of those clubs.
129. Ibid, p.28; In current terms, this would probably represent between £2.5 million and £15 million, as measured with the website `http://www.measuringworth.com` [accessed July 2015].

the club committee generous terms to settle the accounts. This fostered the development of an extravagant culture of spending and breaking. The club offered easy credit, as long as members carried names that were well known in Britain and the colony. Although the club posted several members on its public board to avoid falling into bankruptcy, it was nonetheless lenient towards those who could not afford to repay their accounts. The only expulsion cases in Muthaiga exceeded by far an issue of debt: a member was fined and expelled for being drunk and assaulting an Asian postmaster in Nanyuki.[130] As long as the problem went beyond the club walls, the institution could not do much to silence it. The same applied when a brawl involved both a British and an Italian member, the latter having to resign. A conspicuous disregard for materiality and finances, and of a strong sense of detachment toward common discipline and moral values made Muthaiga's unique ethos a reflection of its members' innate sense of superiority. Men and women boasting about their adulterous relationships, their many weddings and divorces, were commonplace. Jocelyn Hayes, the Earl of Eroll and a well-known figure at the Muthaiga and Naivasha Clubs, was more famous for his many successes with married females than for any other achievement.[131] All these behaviours and statements were unaffordable for the common country settler, constrained by the requirements of white prestige due to his dependence on African labour, largely indebted to bankers and speculators, made anxious by his many failures in farming. The average rural farmer actually resented Muthaiga's behaviours. C.J. Todd, a farm manager bitterly remembered:

> The Happy Valley Crowd who, unlike most of us, had the money to devote to a life of leisure and, what they considered, pleasure. Unfortunately the Press got onto them with the result that the settlers of Kenya achieved an undeservedly notorious reputation of the kind that produced such quips as, "Are you married, or do you live in Kenya.". In a small community such people were so very obvious, whereas, had they remained in Britain, they would have been no more unusual than the other "Bright Young Things" whose behaviour was notorious during the Twenties.[132]

The Happy Valley's debauchery ruined all efforts to make settlers respectable trustees of the natives, perhaps more actually as regards to Whitehall than to the Africans.

In Nairobi women also developed specific patterns of sociability, mostly in homes and hotels. Ray Nestor, who came to Kenya with his sister, recalled that "as a regular feature of town life they held their morning tea parties either in their homes or at one of the hotels, where doubtless the reputations of their neighbours were eagerly discussed, as well as the problems of the housewife, servants and the cost of living. Bridge parties were enjoyed by both men and women, and the standard of play was exceptionally high among the latter".[133] The diaries of Daphne Moore, wife to the Colonial Secretary to Kenya

130. Ibid, p.28
131. Trzebinski, *The Life and Death of Lord Erroll. The Truth Behind the Happy Valley Murder*, 98.
132. RHO MSS. Afr. s. 917, C.T. Todd, Kenya's Red Sunset, 1920-1965, p.104.
133. RHO MSS. Afr. s. 1086, R. Nestor Reminiscences, p.66.

in the early 1930s, who later became governor, relate the entire days spent visiting each other's houses, playing tennis, and having lunches and dinners between the Nairobi and Muthaiga Clubs.

She found these clubs "dreary", Muthaiga being "only a degree less deadly than Nairobi Club", resented the time spent at the League of Mercy, the Y.M.C.A. or The Girl Guides Association with "gloomy female groups" and "female British asses", ridiculed with much cruelty "ghastly", "everything but amusing" dinner parties and calling practices; complained as she "had never seen a more bored and bloated collection of people".[134] Yet she spent most of her time at these events and functions, which she commented at length in her diaries and letters to her mother. Like all the wives of officials and settlers elites, she had an intense social life, despite finding much of it irritating. She showed in her writings an extreme sensitivity to personalities, rumours and gossip concerning everything from government policies to sexual behaviour. Her letters give an idea of the role played by administrative and settlers' wives in the colony, and the specific perceptions that resulted from such social culture.

Moore was even more able to recount these practices in that she did not seem to fit Kenya's whites ethos. She resented the ornamental discipline of official functions and the boisterous arrogance of settlers' circles, places and moments of aristocratic culture where she and her husband were regarded as "very lower-middle-class".[135] Yet on rare occasions, she seemed to enjoy Muthaiga's feasts, when all were drunk, "sang chanties and threw bread and were very gay"; "balanced glasses over bottles and bottles over glasses", noticing that she only broke three.[136]

She had heard a lot about the Muthaiga Country Club before she came to Kenya. However her first time was "a great disappointment after the lurid pictures one had formed of it from tales heard at home", reflecting the discrepancies between settlers' actual practices, especially as regards to sexuality, and the way they were often exaggerated and criticized in Britain.[137] However, she came back, invited with her husband to Lord Delamere's birthday. She described in her diary the conspicuous culture peculiar to Muthaiga, iconic of the settlers' elite practices, a "curious mixture of the ostentatious and the squalid". People, she wrote, would "give a eight course dinner of caviars, lobsters and whatnot at an hotel and go back afterwards to their own house, built of tin and without drainage of any kind".[138] Muthaiga's culture carried a strong optimism for the future of colonialism, for all lived "on overdraft and hope", with women "too well dressed" as regards to their actual economic condition.[139] It carried a defiance toward

134. RHO MSS. Brit.Emp.s. 466(3) Moore, Kenya Diary, 1929-34.
135. Ibid, Friday 19th September, 1930.
136. Ibid., Friday, 3rd September, 1930, dates added as written in the diary.
137. Ibid, Sunday, 9th June 1929.
138. Ibid, Wednesday, June the 12th, 1929.
139. Ibid, Saturday, June 22, 1929 & 12.06, 1929

administrators and their more rigid social practices, quibbling protocols and sense of responsibility and prestige toward the Africans. Caricatured in Great Britain for their life of debauchery, in criticisms targeted at the infamous Happy Valley set of idle heirs and aristocrats, Muthaiga settlers as a whole overplayed such image in return, making stories of adultery a genre of discourse particularly practised in Nairobi's high society. Hence the bitter description of Lady Moore – herself an official's wife, outnumbered with her party in a settlers atmosphere – and her distaste for such people and social practices that she perceived as vulgar. In the highest of settlers' circles, vulgarity became an attribute of self-distinction, which distinguished them from officials and their rigid ethos.

Nevertheless rudeness and obscenity were codified and restricted to some areas of discourse, while outrageous behaviour was limited only to some moments and circumstances, such as the end of a dinner. This made Moore, on more usual occasions, state that she was "always being seized with an almost uncontrollable desire to eat peas off [her]knife and blow into [her]saucer in their company".[140] This is how she recalls Delamere's birthday party, in 1929:

> So this is Muthaiga!
>
> There were a fair number of people there and a really excellent jazz band. The floor was good and also the champagne. The people were not so good. There were about four officials, the rest were settlers and commercial people. I sat next to Roy Spicer who knows everyone. I said Who is that woman over there. He said That is Mrs So and So whose husband is a planter in Ceylon. A young man called This and That was found dead the other day, having drunk a bottle of Lysol and besides him was her photograph with a quotation from Kipling written across it: – "There was a man and he made his prayer, etc"[141] –. The man she is living with now, the old bird sitting next to her is known as Champagne Charlie; he is a remittance man. I said Oh, who is that? That is Mrs Whatnot who was divorced by her husband, whom she had now married, and over there is Mr Whatnot, who has now married the divorced wife of Mr This-That-and-the-Other. And that man sitting beside Lady Delamere? That is Raymond de Trafford who was shot by the Countess de Janze at the Gard du Nord, after she had got her husband to divorce her on his account. R de T was trying to escape is coming back to Kenya next week. He is a most fascinating man and she is exceedingly attractive[142]. And so on.
>
> I was Thrilled. I thought This is something Like. The stories were very much alike: the husband's weapon varied between a six-shooter and a horse-whip but in every case he said: –"I'll give you two minutes to quit this house and two days to quit the country". I must say I thought that very decent of his. The most amusing variation was when the lover stole a gallon trim of the

140. Ibid, Friday 19th September, 1930

141. A reference to R. Kipling's The Vampire, "A fool there was and he made his prayer/(Even as you and I!)/To a rag and a bone and a hank of hair/(We called her the woman who did not care)/But the fool he called her his lady fair/(Even as you and I!)"

142. Raymond de Trafford and Alice de Janze were notoriously part of the infamous "Happy Valley set".

> husband's petrol when decamping with the wife and the husband sued him for theft of the petrol.
>
> Everyone seemed very matey and free with their arms and their speech. Lord D, who was once the leading light of Muthaiga and used to drown the place in champagne, went home early, but his wife stayed and made up for his absence. She is a – quite.
>
> We didn't meet anyone outside our own party but we thought from careful observation of the manners, customs and appearance of the company that on the whole they were vulgar without being funny. The men looked perhaps a degree less dissipated than the women, who were on the whole rather "usées" looking, though many were very attractive. But everyone seemed so busy trying to be naughty and to give the impression of being no end of a devil that the effect was rather artificial. Not that a lot of them don't succeed in BEEING naughty, but they don't hide their lights under bushels over it. I saw Tony Poole's brother (he who won the Calcutta Sweep and was jilted by Dorothy Stockley) but as he was very drunk I refused an offer of an introduction. T.P. is still in Zanzibar, living on the proceeds of the Sweep with a wife referred to by Roy as Delores, –with a meaning wink.[143]

Daphne Moore regularly assessed the governor's reputation, as well as other administrators, at a time when Sir Edward Grigg was extremely unpopular due to his mission to merge Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika into a unique colony, an attempt that brought much discontent to settlers. She reported to her husband, who might have taken advantage of it, as an intermediary between settlers and the governor, between district administrators and the "headquarters". The Indian Crisis of 1923 had shown that settlers were ready to stand a hard line against the officials schemes. In Moore's words, the administrators of the 1930s were terrorised by settlers. Some of them even invited leading officials to join their own parties, in social circles where they were in the minority, probably in an act where connivance and condescension were both at play. Joss Hays, for instance, often invited to his house parties the district commissioner for Naivasha and his wife.[144]. Settlers "regard[ed] every measure introduced from their own point of view only and never from the country's so things usually end[ed] in an unofficial vs official wrangle, in which the pampered settler w[on]".[145] The Moores mingled easily but uncomfortably in settlers' circles, assessing the balance of power, testing the reaction to a proposed measure or report.

Men's career and authority also varied upon their ability to take advantage of the social scene, in which their wives played a great role. Despite its apparent thoughtlessness and informality, it was no less political than the official realm of elections and decisions. Social reputations were attached to a surname, and did not differentiate among individuals: "the Rhodes", the "Sheridan", "the Huggard", all family denominations that inhabited

143. Saturday, June 29th, 1929, RHO MSS.Brit.Emp.s. 466(3) Moore. Kenya Diary 1929-34.
144. Trzebinski, *The Life and Death of Lord Erroll. The Truth Behind the Happy Valley Murder*, 109-110.
145. RHO MSS. Brit.Emp.s. 466(3) Moore, Kenya Diary, 1929-34, 18.6.29.

Moore's accounts. A bad name could bring some discredit in politics, and more widely in professional life. Gossips, most often of a sexual nature, could qualify or disqualify, exclude or include. Reputations had knock-off effects in many spheres, all more or less permeable to the club scene, which functioned as an interface between the serious realms of politics, business and professions; and leisure, games, domesticity, culture, arts and conversation. It mediated both elite conflicts and affinities. Reciprocal knowledge in the social realm smoothed over feuds. More generally, it provided an intersticial place for individuals who had an interest in knowing each other, without being too familiar.

The many degrees of inclusion allowed a wide variety of relationships between members. For instance, clubs dances and social events could be privatized, permitting the choice of suitable guests among the membership and beyond, at the expense of the less desirable elements of the membership. Ray Nestor, recalls that in the Nairobi Club, "on occasions private dances were held at the club. More than one dance was given at which the name of the host was kept so secret, it was not made known even after the event. One wonders what could have inspired such generous action, which must have been a heavy expense not only on the account of the hire of the hall but also because snack and drinks were provided free".[146]

A wide range of social and sporting practices matched a great variety and intensity of social ties. The Moore's party at a diner included their closest friends, but kept acquaintances at sight. Distant, indirect sports such as squash and tennis provided a common ground for people who did not know each other well. Horse riding and hunting brought them closer. In most clubs, the many sports sections and playing fields, the doubling of bars and restaurants allowed practices of avoidance and self-segregation, through the multiplication of subspaces and internal enclosures. The many types of social spaces that clubs afforded restricted friendships, debates and disputes to a selected number of individuals, whose polite manners allowed to deal with the matter peacefully. A game of bridge at Muthaiga was an occasion to discuss politics in a smooth, indirect way. It was nonetheless felt as a ruthless game, as Lady Moore recalled:

> [We]went out to dine with Mr Schwartze at Muthaiga, the only other guest being Mr Conway Harvey, who has taken Lord Delamere's place as leader of the unofficial members.[147]
>
> Political innuendoes buzzed lightly about the dinner table but no fighting took place. They are both nice but trail no fly-papers; they might, in fact, be unkindly described as political Stiffs. We played bridge of a warlike type, with the usual result that M[148] and I lost, and feeling between S and his partner ran high at times, though owing to the mild disposition of C.H., rather one-sidedly. I don't know, but on the surface of things it would appear that S IS

146. RHO MSS. Afr. s. 1086, R. Nestor Reminiscences, p.66, on dances see also RHO MSS Afr.s. 1653 C. F. Anderson: Reminiscences, p.19.
147. i.e. at the colony Legislative Council.
148. Lady Moore's husband, Henry Monck-Mason Moore, is always nicknamed "M" in her diaries.

> the unofficial party; certainly he seems to have C.H. well buttoned into his pocket. Nevertheless and notwithstanding, we like them both.[149]

Games encouraged settlers and officials to cooperate and provided an informal arena of discussion on political matters. Sharing games and leisure provided a common ground, in spite of occasional discomfort.

Lady Moore, as a member of many committees, was involved independently in these politics. Her social life replicated her husband's professional and political interests. For instance, Moore explained how Lady Grigg, the governor's wife, had to suffer from settlers' abhorrence toward her husband, through the League of Mercy politics, that she neglected or feared to attend, and consequently to control. Lady Moore was summoned to have dinner at Governor's House, to discuss what seems to have been an important matter:

> It was about a very stormy meeting we had at which Mrs Hamilton, Mathews[150] and others had asked that Lady Grigg should be asked to resign from being President on the ground that she didn't attend meetings […]Everyone of the 14 members of the Committee voted for Mrs Hamilton's motion except Lady D[151], Mrs Wade, and myself and my hackles had been set up by the tone of Mrs H's remarks, which were virulently personal (she is one of Lady G's particular enemies). There was tremendous chat and I was violently attacked by Mrs Mathews and altogether we had a great time. Finally we compromised on asking Lady G to be Patroness instead of President, on the legitimate grounds that it was a rule of the constitution that a member must attend so many meetings, and the secretary was instructed to write to that effect. Next morning Mesdames H and M marched into the sec's house and wrote a letter themselves which they asked her to sign. She rightly refused and I advised her to send the letter to the Vice-P (who had presided as Lady McM[152] was away) to sign if she wanted to. The Vice P, who is one of the anti-Grigg band, signed it and Lady G got the extremely curt letter and was very hurt and upset; hence the excitement. All very awkward and silly. I went to G.H.[153], full of tact and diplomacy, to find that Lady G. had seen Lady D in the afternoon who had told her the entire story, not omitting names. [...] We had a lovely evening ! Lady Francis Scott was the only guest and the League of Mercy was the only topic of conversation. Lady G wanted to resign in high dudgeon but was persuaded to treat the matter with contempt.[154]

Moore's account well illustrates the permanent tension between men's political misfortunes and the necessity for their wives to save face in social life. Women of Nairobi's high society competed by taking full advantage of the many leagues, associations and charities to which they were part. The tight net of institutions and their peculiar rules and official

149. RHO MSS. Brit.Emp.s. 466(3) Moore, Kenya Diary, 1929-34, Thursday, June 20th, 1929
150. Wives of Nairobi's then most famous lawyers, founders of the Hamilton, Harrison and Matthews legal firm.
151. Lady Delamere.
152. Widow of Lord William Northrop Macmillan, and American big game hunter and landowner.
153. Governor's House.
154. Saturday 28th December 1929, MSS. Brit.Emp.s. 466(3) Moore, Kenya Diary, 1929-34.

titles formalized reputations, honours and disgraces. In these matters, Nairobi differed from the rural areas, since its social life presented a greater degree of autonomy. In Nairobi, conflicts between members of the East African Women's League and the League of Mercy in Nairobi largely reflected their husbands' power struggles; nonetheless it was a space of its own, a world of little distinctions and petty humiliations whose effects were peculiar to the women's realm.

IX. A Recomposition of Gender Roles

Throughout Kenya, the dynamics of racial assimilation and status differentiation that drove the colony's sociability impacted on the way Europeans in Kenya conceived gendered roles and women's place. Until the Second World War, men outnumbered women in the colony. Clubs, therefore, reflected male domination. They were first marked by a military ethos: men in arms, auxiliaries of the conquest state, preferred to organize their own domestic life, providing they would be served by others. For these "manly independent individuals", masculinity was also a matter of gardening and decoration; in clubs, hunting trophies, regimental crests, tapestries and bi-coloured, mat paintings reflected these tastes.[155] Before the 1930s, most clubs were reluctant to admit women, even as guests. None were full members. In the Mombasa Club for instance, they were only accepted as spouses and confined to certain rooms. The 29th rule of the 1903 constitution was clear: no women were allowed after 6 p.m. and never at any time in the billiard and cards rooms.[156] A native servant passed with a bell in hand that he rang to give women notice that this was time for them to leave.[157] Women, however, opposed this humiliation quite successfully; they were increasingly tolerated on the premises. The status of full member however remained a male privilege, as was the right to sit in playing rooms: women had to be kept away from crude speech.[158] The Nairobi Club was not different. Women were expected to stay outside of the clubhouse, next to the veranda, waiting for the members to bring them their drinks. From 1912 however, they won the right to use the library and to come to guests nights.[159]

Male domination remained at the heart of Nairobi clubs' sociability, on sports fields and dining rooms alike. As compared with rural establishments, their staff was for the greater part professional and the social life covered a wider spectrum of associations. The

155. On the concept of "manly independent individuals" see Hall, "The Economy of Intellectual Prestige: Thomas Carlyle, John Stuart Mill, and the Case of Governor Eyre"; and: Catherine Hall, *White, Male and Middle Class: Explorations in Feminism and History* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992).
156. Frankl, "The Early Years of the Mombasa Club: A Home Away from Home for European Christians."
157. Foran, *A Cuckoo in Kenya. The Reminiscences of a Pioneer Police Officer in British East Africa*, 224-225.
158. Foran, *A Cuckoo in Kenya. The Reminiscences of a Pioneer Police Officer in British East Africa*, 225; Rodwell, *The Mombasa Club*, 15-17.
159. Round-Turner, *Nairobi Club. The Story of 100 Years. A Celebration of the Club Centenary*, 30-33.

gendered sociability of the East African Women's League and the League of Mercy, which were so central elsewhere, were not part of the club world. Women's domestic skills were hardly needed; their presence irritated the many members who thought clubs should have remained a male preserve. The memoirs of the policeman Robert Foran encapsulates how gender differences were at play in the Nairobi Club of the late 1910s:

> Black-Barnes [a former midshipman in the Royal Navy]and I were seated in the reading-room of the club one evening, devouring the content of the latest England periodicals. The room was crowded with ladies, but no other men were present. Among the former was the wife of a junior Treasury official, whose husband owned an African grey parrot. […]She was explaining in rather loud tones to another lady about the accomplishments of the parrot, and relating how her husband made a habit of teaching the bird new phrases while enjoying *chota bazri*[160]. Suddenly she called across the room and asked me to interpret the meaning of a particularly unprintable word, which she heard the husband repeating to the parrot that morning. Every head in the room went up and there came a rustle of papers. Blushing furiously, I declared my ignorance of the word and its meaning. Not to be baulked in her thirst of knowledge, she next appealed to Black-Barnes for enlightenment; and, without turning a hair, he smiled and answered suavely: "It's a term of endearment commonly used among sailors, madam". This satisfied her curiosity. The other occupants of the room buried their faces in newspapers to hide their broad smiles and blushes. I hurriedly left for the bar.[161]

In Nairobi clubs especially, the main registers of social interaction, conversation in particular, were to women's disadvantage. They were the realm of saucy jokes and crude humour in which women could not engage without looking too rude. Coarseness remained a male privilege.

Women's integration into clubs came along with their increasing role in social and political affairs. In the 1920s they had developed a sociability of their own, especially through the East African Women's League. The League was created in 1917 to obtain women's civic rights in the municipal and legislative councils. Kenya's European women won the right to vote and stand for office in 1919, nine years before their British counterparts, after the League petitioned for a representative government of "all white residents". In the aftermath of this success, the League remained to "work for the improvement of conditions of life and women and children of all races".[162] Women thus engaged in public affairs; they opened schools, libraries and hold offices: Lady Delamere became the first woman to be elected at the Nairobi Municipal Council in 1934 and its first mayor four years later.[163]

160. Anglo-Indian term for *breakfast*

161. Foran, *A Cuckoo in Kenya. The Reminiscences of a Pioneer Police Officer in British East Africa*, 257-8.

162. Edward Rodwell, *East African Women's League, Fifty Years, 1917-1967* (1967).

163. Glenda Riley, *Taking Land, Breaking Land. Women Colonizing the American West and Kenya, 1840-1940* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2003), 183-185.

The increasing role of women in the public sphere owed much to the preservation of a white racial solidarity, which tended to level gender and class hierarchies in settler society. This phenomenon was not entirely peculiar to the colony, and between the wars, women engaged in public affairs in Britain too, arguing that as mothers and increasingly as workers they could contribute to their country's welfare. They founded women's clubs, for instance in association with the Rotary Foundation. It remains hard, however, to tell how much these changes in Britain affected the colonies or vice versa.[164]

The Great War also led to a better integration of women in clubs. In the Nairobi Club, all white officers serving in the armed forces, including women, were eligible for membership. They became tolerated on the tennis courts and a lady's lounge was opened to cater to these new members. The committee, however, found a way to reassert male domination over the club, since it built women's commodities outside of the clubhouse. At the end of the 1930s, when they were eventually allowed in the dining hall, the committee built a special staircase which directly linked the library and the restaurant, avoiding all the men's rooms.[165]

Albeit admitted to urban clubs, women still found themselves stigmatized. In many respects, clubs' feminization only brought in these institutions some domestic inequalities that existed elsewhere, and through this process these inequalities found themselves reinforced. For instance, women's conversations were relegated to the registers of confidence with their tennis partners and changing-rooms gossiping. A dinner scene attended in 1929 by Lady Daphne Moore, a few months after she arrived in the colony, reveals the cruelty at play in a Nairobi Club still marked by its officer-class culture:

> We dined with the Grannums (the retiring Treasurer) at the Nairobi Club, a big dinner of about 16. […]Well, it was SUCH a jolly evening, the kind of evening that could, I imagined, only occur in Nairobi. All was merry as a marriage bell (though why that should be considered a joyous sound I can't think) until a little mild health-drinking occurred at the end. Various people were called on to speak and bashfully refused and then Captain Schwartze[166] was implored to make a speech or tell a story. He, on the spur of the moment and facetiously, though nonetheless very rudely said: the trouble about most of my stories is that they are too indecent for most ladies and not indecent enough for Mrs Merrick[167] and Mrs Tannahill (another guest). After the first shock I laughed heartily, and so did some of the others, when we became aware of a frozen patch in the middle of the side of the table where Schwartze and Mrs M were sitting. I craned round the corner and saw Mrs M's face

164. Helen McCarthy has studied this phenomenon in the case of Soroptimists and the Inner Wheel, although she does not deal with the imperial connections of these movements: Helen McCarthy, "Service clubs, citizenship and equality: gender relations and middle-class associations in Britain between the wars," *Historical Research*, no. 213 (August 2008): 531–552.

165. Minutes of a Special General Meeting, September 1938, Round-Turner, *Nairobi Club. The Story of 100 Years. A Celebration of the Club Centenary.*

166. Then Unofficial Elected Member at the Legislative Council for the Nairobi South Constituency.

167. The wife of the then clerk to the Executive Council, J.E.S. Merrick.

> livid with rage and heard her appeal to her husband. Really, Schwartze, said he obediently, one doesn't say that kind of thing. Whereupon Mrs Grannum caught my eye and we hurriedly joined the Ladies. In the cloakroom Mrs M wept tears of rage and we all patted her on the back and said: "There, there, he didn't really mean it" like the cow in Milne's poem. But she wept and wept and we had to divide into two parties to play vingt-et-un after that, the Merricks at one and Schwartze at another table, to prevent bloodshed. I sat on one side of the culprit and Mrs T, who had quite forgiven him, on the other and most of the other crowded round to stroke Mrs M. I told S he had put his foot in it and was he going to apologise. NO, he said, I'm very glad; she's a beastly woman and I hate the sight of her! This is an example of social life in Nairobi.[168]

British clubs were antithetic to women's presence; in urban Kenya this still seemed like a form of transgression, albeit a necessary one. Hence the impudent remarks they attracted of being too masculine or too virile in their behaviour. This was a powerful register of social disqualification, reproducing gender segregation within clubs.

The gender divide was much more manifest in the cities than it was in the countryside. In rural areas, the members were too few not to need women, especially for catering and service. The East African Women's League, through its many local branches, took charge of organizing the most important events, served tea after tennis tournaments and pinned poppies on buttonholes on Armistice days. Rural clubs were the first to recognize a status of "lady member" provided they were not married. Such right allowed single women to enjoy a respectable status; it kept spinsters inside the community since it was always feared that their behaviour would impair white prestige.[169] Yet lady memberships remained rare: they were 20 in Eldoret Club in the 1930s, of whom three widows out of a membership of 180; in Gilgil they were 15 for 110 members.[170]

In rural clubs, women took charge of clubs' domestic duties. They sat at house and wine committees, organized dances, arts and crafts exhibitions and theatre performances, children's parties and Christmas trees and decorated the clubhouse when required to. Spouses also took over matrimonial affairs. The ladies committees, controlled by the older women, gave dances and parties for the younger members.[171] These occasions were important for the unmarried. Ray Nestor writes in his recollections that "once a month or oftener the clubs held dances at which very good dance orchestras played till late at night. Parties consisted of young people and the well-known hostesses gave dinners at their houses and invited the bachelors to escort their marriageable daughters on the

168. Wednesday 21/08/1929, RHO MSS Brit. Emp. s. 466 (3), Moore: Kenya Diary, 1929-34.
169. See for instance: Will Jackson, "White Man's Country: Kenya Colony and the Making of a Myth," *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 5, no. 2 (2011): 344–368.
170. Eldoret Sports Club, Rules and Bye-Laws, as revised to 31st December 1929, 1930, Minutes of the 1936 Annual General Meeting, KNA MSS 128/32 Gilgil Country Club.
171. For a description of these events at Nairobi Club see RHO MSS Afr. s. 1653, C. F. Anderson: *Reminiscences 1915-1957*, p.19.

dances".[172]

In rural Kenya, women became part of clubs' life, where they gained a status almost equal to men. In the Nyeri Club, a large stage was set up for theatrical performances which attested of these evolutions. In the main hall, right before the stage, small china tiles were inlaid into the wall. They depicted the characters from Gilbert & Sullivan comic operas, often played in clubs. A few of them concerned *Princess Ida*, a popular satire of feminism and women's pretensions to education, yet it was Arac who was painted, the princess's dull and birdbrained brother, maybe a sign of equality in idiocy in a play that was at first a caricature of the battle of the sexes.[173]

172. RHO MSS Afr. s. 1086, Ray Nestor: Reminiscences, p. 19.
173. A. Sullivan et W. S. Gilbert, *Princess Ida or, Castle Adamant, 1884*

Figure 3: Arac in *Princess Ida or, Castle Adamant*, Nyeri Club

The success of clubs among Kenya's settlers was a combination of different phenomena. They were initially the institutions through which the first European migrants, aristocrats and officers, reproduced the sporting habits they had in common. Many of these men came to Kenya to perpetuate a lifestyle they could no longer enjoy in Britain; clubs so answered their conservative representations of self-achievement. This was not true for all whites. Official regulations restricted settlement in Kenya to the wealthier classes among the British population, but could not prevent migration from the continent. Boers and Anglo South Africans also came, whose economic and cultural background was neither aristocratic nor middle class.

However, white settlement was not a popular idea in London, while in Kenya it was contested by Asian migrants. Europeans, half as many as the former, denied their claims on a cultural basis. The refinements of their customs and institutions, they argued, justified political privilege. The settler elite of aristocrats and officers therefore engaged in cultural entrepreneurship. They promoted clubs, polo and golf as a the superior standards of a common white culture, a projection of British prestige overseas. Facing Asians' claims for respectability, colonial clubs then became explicitly racists institutions, whose membership was restricted to those "of pure European descent".

While the Indian Crisis accelerated settlers cohesion along both political and cultural lines, elite patronage led to the formulation of an hegemonic definition of whiteness along gentlemanly lines; that is to say a lifestyle which was considered desirable for all, albeit one unevenly matched. Despite their differences, whites thus formed an aspirational community, of which homogeneity was a myth, with the double meaning of a fictional, teleological narrative and a system of beliefs which framed imaginations and directed the actions.[174] It is this community of interests and aspirations, rather than of economic condition, which led Kenya settlers to develop a distinctive racial culture.

Consequently, women began to be admitted in clubs as members, an evolution which was then unthinkable in Britain. Aristocrats and ex-officers also mingled in a way which was unusual outside of the colony. However, racial solidarity and a community of aspirations did not rule out differences, nor did it imply an equal sociability. Furthermore, the failure of settler agriculture led many to bankruptcy and misery, which contradicted European pretensions. Kenyan clubs thus administrated the tensions between middle-class aspirations and the many economic, educational and professional differences of their members, while material standards remained notoriously low. They did it at the cost of an very bureaucratic apparatus, which produced racial solidarity by regulating class differ-

174. On myths as social formations see: James Ferguson, *Expectations of Modernity. Myths and Meanings of Urban Life on the Zambian Copperbelt* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, Oxford: University of California Press, 1999), 236.

ences. In Nairobi however, white sociability developed along a more specific pattern, with several European clubs reflecting differences of status and professions; Muthaiga was a settlers' stronghold while the Nairobi Club catered to austere officials. The business community and junior officials were barred from the more prestigious institutions, and rather patronized Railways or Parklands. These development made Kenya clubland unique as regards to Britain and other colonies. While multi-racial clubs existed in Asia, Kenya's institutions were uncompromisingly racist. They also developed on a sporting, military pattern that was quite different from the more intellectual sociability of the Rhodesias. In the early 1940s, the possibility of a non-sporting, multiracial club seemed extremely eccentric.

Chapter 2

An Impossible Multi-Racialism

The years following the Second World War marked the beginning of what Low and Lonsdale have termed the "second colonial occupation".[1] The earlier decades of colonization had encouraged white settlement while limiting administrative interventions in the African reserves ; by contrast, the second colonial occupation targeted the latter. It was an attempt of social engineering, an era of intensification of economic exploitation with the ambition to bring "development" to the natives. This was a period of growing racial tensions.

A crucial change was the advent of the first generation of educated Africans. The sons of African middle-men, chiefs, clergymen and army auxiliaries were the first to benefit from missionary education. The majority of them had become teachers or served in junior positions in the Kenya administration. Eagerness for education was so high that it also led to the foundation of many independent schools, which was the crucible of more radical, nationalist group of educated Africans.[2] In 1926, the protestant churches had united their efforts in the creation of Alliance High School, Kenya's first secondary school for Africans. Those who joined Alliance often pursued with university education abroad, in Fort Hare in South Africa, or Makerere in Uganda, which nurtured a first generation of literate elites, whose skills and education well matched those of Europeans.[3]

Educated Africans competed on the job marked with Asians and a new wave of European migrants, less wealthy and educated than the previous ones. Furthermore, there was an acceleration of African migration to the cities, driven away from overpopulated reserves, and from the newly mechanized European farms. In light of the increasing African demand for equal rights and economic opportunities, and the extreme reluctance of settlers to concede anything, British administrators, led by Sir Phillip Mitchell who had

1. John Lonsdale and D. Anthony Low, "East Africa: Towards a New Order," in *Eclipse of Empire*, by D. A. Low (Cambridge: Cambridge University press, 1991), 164–214.

2. See Chapter 7 in Derek Peterson, *Creative Writing. Translation, Bookkeeping, and the Work of Imagination in Colonial Kenya* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2004), 139-157.

3. Benjamin E. Kipkorir, "The Inheritors and Sucessors: The Traditional Background to the Modern Kenyan African Elite: Kenya c. 1890-1930," *Kenya Historical Review. The Journal of the Historical Association of Kenya* 2, no. 2 (1974): 143–161; Benjamin E. Kipkorir, "The Alliance High School and the Making of the Kenya African Elite. 1926-1962" (PhD diss., University of Cambridge, 1969); Florida Amakobe Karani, "The History of Maseno School 1906-62, Its Alumni and the Local Society" (master's thesis, University of Nairobi, 1974); See also D.K. Leonard's pages on the role of missions in the formation of African elites David K. Leonard, *African Successes. Four Public Managers of Kenyan Rural Development* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, Oxford: University of California Press, 1991).

experienced it during its term in Fiji, started to promote and implement a new doctrine for colony rule. Termed as multiracialism, it promoted the principle of separated development for each racial community, each electing its political leaders through a distinct electoral roll, with the assumption that the three communities would as such be political equals, in spite of the imbalance in their respective demographic weight. This project was deeply elitist, for it advocated a unique standard of civilization and modernity, assuming that each race will reach it at its own speed. Only individuals considered culturally similar to Europeans would the rights of the latter.

But multi-racialism, like the "imperial trusteeship" of the Devonshire White Paper before, was, first and foremost, an ideological project, "a symbolic formulae", almost an incantation. It had to cope with contradictory tensions : settlers' intransigence in preserving their privileges; the growing discontent in the reserves; the rise of African nationalism, both radical and moderate; the administration's own departmental divisions and Asian anxiety regarding their own status should any political change occur. It was in this context that a set of European liberals – a rather marginal group – with the support of the authorities, founded Kenya's first multiracial club, the United Kenya Club. This experience, eventually a partial failure, illustrates the gamut of ambivalence concerning the social formation of race and class in late colonial Kenya. Mingling people who had so little in common, the UKC could not be a club in anything but name, a typically homogeneous, self-evident institution. Studying the UKC also sheds light on what prevented or entailed the transgression of racial barriers, as such categories were a matter of embodied perceptions, as much as official designations. It eventually shows how race was an operation which naturalized cultural traits in ruling class attributes, rooting a specific elite culture a the heart of state formation, beyond the official chronologies of colonization and decolonization.

I. The New Spirit of British Imperialism

The post-war years in Kenya were troubled times ; the colony experienced fast and brutal changes. The conflict had left Kenya with an ideological and administrative legacy that deeply affected it. In the United Kingdom as in the colony, the war effort had reshaped the role and structure of the state. In Britain, its aftermath opened an era of state interventionism while the principles of the welfare state were implemented by the Atlee government. The Empire was not left intact. The fall of Singapore and the occupation of Malaysia in 1942 remained traumatic events for those who held the reins of imperial politics, since many Indian prisoners turned against Britain and fought with the Japanese. Some voices were raised for the welfare of colonized populations and for putting an end

to the colour bar.[4] In 1940, the Colonial Development and Welfare Act led the way for increased expenditures towards the colonies, in the aftermath of a long crisis in the West Indies.

The new spirit of British imperialism was therefore fuelled by a set of converging dynamics. First, it was necessary to prevent new troubles in the colonies while nationalisms were on the rise; it was also important to justify the relevance of a colonial empire before the United States. These new policies aimed at co-opting the emerging native elites to make sure they became reliable supporters of the colonial project. The nomination of Arthur Creech-Jones as secretary of state for the colonies was a move in this direction; Creech Jones had advocated for the advancement of native populations while he was the secretary of the Fabian Colonial Bureau.[5] These new objectives were however subordinated to economic necessities. The Empire, weakened by the war, remained fragile. It was necessary to increase its economic profitability, in order to provide for the new needs of Britain and its colonies. Creech-Jones himself was constrained by the Treasury; any progress toward the Africans was dependent on the perspective of economic returns.[6]

The links between Britain and its colonies were reinforced. In the Empire, overseas states increased their administrative prerogatives; they strengthened their hold over native affairs, especially through what started to be termed "development".[7] In colonial states, the number of civil servants increased considerably, especially in the technical departments. In Kenya, this second colonial occupation generated major social and political changes. However, theses changes were not the ones expected in London, for reasons due to the very nature of the colonial state and its contradictions. Subjected to different constraints, the Colonial Office in London, the governor in Kenya, the provincial administrators and the technical officers in the field had different views on where African interests lay and about the policies to implement.

In January 1945, Sir Philip Euen Mitchell was appointed governor of Kenya. He was an experienced administrator who knew East Africa well, having served as the chief native commissioner in Tanganyika and in Uganda as governor, before co-ordinating the war effort in the region. He was back from an assignment as the governor of Fidji, where he had implemented an able policy combining economic development and inter-racial partnership; his successes had convinced the Americans of the legitimacy of British rule in the archipelago. In Suva, he had managed to lessen the antagonisms between Indians and Fijians.[8] His reputation of impartiality before racial issues made him a well-respected

4. Cherry Gertzel, "Margery Perham's image of Africa," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 19, no. 3 (1991): 27–44.

5. Johanna Lewis, *Empire State Building. War and Welfare in Kenya, 1925-52* (Oxford, Nairobi, Athens (OH): James Currey, E. A. E. P., Ohio University Press, 2000), 89-101.

6. David Throup, *Economic & Social Origins of Mau Mau* (Oxford, Nairobi, Athens (OH): James Currey, Heinemann Kenya, Ohio University Press, 1987), 18-20.

7. Berman, *Control & Crisis in Colonial Kenya. The Dialectic of Domination*, 257-262.

8. Richard A. Frost, *Enigmatic Proconsul. Sir Philip Mitchell and the Twilight of Empire* (Londres:

administrator, who was held in high esteem by the Colonial Office, as well as Indian and African leaders when he was appointed to Kenya.[9] In East Africa however, the situation greatly differed from what he had known before.

Mitchell had come to Kenya with the idea, that he shared with London, to lessen racial tensions trough the practice of multiracialism. The doctrine of multiracialism, or "partnership" was above all a principle, and this principle was actually very unclear.[10] It aimed at replacing the old doctrine that since 1923 guaranteed the preeminence of African interests, under the benevolent authority of Europeans settlers and administrators. By contrast, multiracialism, in Mitchell's mind, was based on the idea that the colony formed a society made up of three racial communities –Arabs were ignored, in theory and practice– each benefiting from a political representation according to its degree of cultural advancement. However, multiracialism was an imprecise, confused doctrine since it was never clearly established if its prescriptions were to be transitory or permanent. Mulitracialism could therefore both justify European privilege and encourage African nationalism. Indeed Mitchell believed in African progress, but one whose fulfilment was only expected in a distant future. Europeans were therefore destined to remain the trustees of modernity and civilisation while African access to political representation was subordinated to their degree of conformity to Eurocentric standards.[11]

Among Europeans, settlers had gained influence during the war. They had greatly benefited from the high demand for agricultural produces generated by the war effort; they had been able to clear their debts contracted with the banks during the Great Depression; their production had become more diverse. However, their economic position remained parasitic since it was fuelled by a guaranteed prices policy, thanks to parastatal agencies which marketed their produces. Settlers' control over the latter had increased, helped by the departure of many officials who served in the forces during the conflict.[12] As agricultural producers, they benefited from a monopolistic position while Africans in the reserves could not enjoy the same marketing conditions, nor the same selling prices. They increasingly resorted to the black market to clear their stock. The economic growth of the 1940s increased the deterioration of racial relations since it became obvious that white farmers and African peasants had contradictory interests.[13]

The first months of Mitchell's mandate were marked by several constitutional reforms, aiming at restoring the neutrality of the colonial state. It sought to balance settlers' influ-

The Radcliffe Press, 1992), 158-173.

9. Richard A. Frost, *Race Against Time. Human Relations and Politics in Kenya before Independence* (Nairobi: Transafrica Press, 1978), 45.

10. Lonsdale and Low, "East Africa: Towards a New Order," 207.

11. Sir Philip Mitchell, *African Afterthoughts* (London: Hutchinson, 1954), 254.

12. Bennett, *Kenya A Political History. The Colonial Period*, 89-98; Throup, *Economic & Social Origins of Mau Mau*, 13; Berman, *Control & Crisis in Colonial Kenya. The Dialectic of Domination*, 264-268.

13. David Anderson and David Throup, "Africans and Agricultural Production in Colonial Kenya: The Myth of the War as a Watershed," *The Journal of African History* 26, no. 4 (1985): 327–345.

ence and to better racial relations through the political representation of non-Europeans, and to increase the prerogatives of the administration in order to implement economic development policies in the African reserves.[14] Non-officials were therefore called to sit at the colony's Executive Council, with a dedicated portfolio, in what was a quasi-ministerial system.[15] The governor was however forced to appoint Cavendish-Bentinck as the member for agriculture. Major Ferdinand Cavendish-Bentinck, the 8th Duke of Portland and a third cousin to the Queen, was an archetypical settlers' leader. An Old Etonian, he attended Sandhurst and was badly wounded during the First World War. He later served as the private secretary to the governor of Uganda, before settling in Kenya in the late 1920s. His cultural and social tastes were similar to those of his peers; he attended the Eldoret Club and the Muthaiga when in Nairobi, and was a steward of the Jockey Club.[16] During the war, Cavendish Bentinck had chaired most of the agricultural parastatal boards, consolidating his position as a settlers' firebrand. His nomination as government member was at first a ploy to cut him off from his political basis, yet this was a clumsy move since it pushed the government to recognize the dominant position that settlers had gained during the war. In a few months, Mitchell was "captured" by the settlers, submitting all reforms to their agreement.[17] Despite his will to lessen racial tensions, the first months of his mandate had the opposite effect. He fuelled the suspicion of both Africans and Indians while settlers opposed any move towards an African representation at the Legislative Council.[18]

These constitutional reforms aimed at increasing the government's ability to foster economic growth while providing a better coordination of all administrative departments and redefining their prerogatives. Hitherto in Kenya, the administrative system was a dual one, split between the provincial administration and the technical departments, without coordination between the two components. African reserves were ruled by the provincial administration; the latter perceived themselves as a protective screen between African interests and the destructive influences of the outside world.[19] On the other side, the police, the agricultural and veterinary departments, as a consequence of settlers influence on the government, were diverted to European districts. As a consequence, African reserves were administered in a quasi-discretionary manner. The second colonial occupation broke this duality, with the intensification of technical services' involvement in the African reserves. The number of civil servants serving these specialized tasks increased

14. Berman, *Control & Crisis in Colonial Kenya. The Dialectic of Domination*, 282.
15. Bennett, *Kenya A Political History. The Colonial Period*, 101.
16. KNA MSS 4/272 Muthaiga Country Club List of Members 1964; "Lords of the Races", *The East African*, 6/03/2007, RHO MSS Afr. s.950, Brindley Papers.
17. Throup, *Economic & Social Origins of Mau Mau*, 37.
18. See the controversies over the *colonial papers* 190 and 210 Bennett, *Kenya A Political History. The Colonial Period*, 53-76; Throup, *Economic & Social Origins of Mau Mau*, 48-52; Frost, *Enigmatic Proconsul. Sir Philip Mitchell and the Twilight of Empire*, 199-201; Frost, *Race Against Time. Human Relations and Politics in Kenya before Independence*, 55-56.
19. Berman and Lonsdale, *Book Two: Violence & Ethnicity*, 237-9.

accordingly. The growing interference of technical officers in the reserves irritated the provincial administration; it also fuelled African discontent.[20]

African grievances were on the rise. When the second colonial occupation struck the reserves, African peasantry was already in crisis. These troubles originated in the 1930s, and they particularly struck the Kikuyu. This was because class formation, in Kenya a rural process, was nowhere more acute than among this group. Kikuyu reserves surrounded the White Highlands ; thus, of all tribes, they had been the most exposed to the effects of colonialism. They were close to settlers' farms, where squatter labour was needed. By the 1930s, it is estimated that 150 000 men, one out of eight Kikuyu, were squatters, half of them in the Rift Valley.[21] They earned a decent income, and more wives testified that their living conditions were on average better than in the reserves.[22] However, the war engendered a sudden prosperity for white farmers, and by the early 1940s they started to have sufficient capital to exploit their land at full scale. Together with mechanization, this led to the eviction of squatters, who had mistakenly thought that two generations of labourers secured them land rights. Dispossessed squatters were left no choice but to return to the reserves in numbers. These reserves, however, were overpopulated, and there was not enough land available to feed 1,25 million Kikuyu. The returning squatters found themselves swelling the ranks of an already considerable population of landless Africans.[23]

All Kikuyu were not equal with regard to land shortage. Unequal access to economic opportunities provided by the colonial system had driven class-formation in the reserves. African chiefs hugely benefited from their position as gatekeepers between the reserves and the colonial state. While recruiting labour and arbitrating land issues, they rewarded relatives and clients. Besides their political power, they often combined the role of large landlords, businessmen and church elders. A series of circumstances further fostered the development of a class of wealthy landlords along chieftancy lineages. From the mid-1920s, the colonial administration had encouraged African commodity production to sustain its tax base against the failure of settlers' agriculture.[24] The war boosted the profitability of Kikuyu cash-crops: the armies on the East African front, along with Nairobi's increasing manpower, were their main outlet. Many chiefs enriched themselves considerably, to the benefit of their patronage networks, and at the expense of an increasing number of poor tenants and casual workers.

20. Berman and Lonsdale, *Book Two: Violence & Ethnicity*, 243.

21. Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged. Britain's dirty war in Kenya and the end of the Empire*, 24; Van Zwanenberg and King, *An Economic History of Kenya and Uganda, 1800-1970*, 42.

22. Lonsdale, "Ornamental Constitutionalism in Africa: Kenyatta and the Two Queens," 275.

23. Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged. Britain's dirty war in Kenya and the end of the Empire*, 23-31; Throup, *Economic & Social Origins of Mau Mau*, 121-139; Berman and Lonsdale, *Book Two: Violence & Ethnicity*, 417-420; Tabitha Kanogo, *Squatters and the Roots of Mau Mau* (East African Educational Publishers, 1989).

24. Berman, *Control & Crisis in Colonial Kenya. The Dialectic of Domination*, 200-201.

Their authority attracted two ranges of criticism. First, inequalities were understood and contested in vernacular terms; land, in particular, was a concern to many. For Kikuyu males, attainment of full adulthood was achieved through land ownership; independent subsistence reflected self-mastery and allowed them to acquire wives. Land penury and the resulting frustration fuelled a growing protest against the chiefs' authority. This anger was further sustained by the chiefs' supervision of the major works required by the second colonial occupation. The terracing of soils, the implementation of regulations regarding to the size of cultivations and the prevention of cattle diseases aimed at increasing the productivity of the reserves. Offenders were fined and works were implemented through forced communal labour, which chiefs recruited and supervised This inflamed a fierce resistance to their authority.[25]

The chiefs' conservative leadership was contested by two sorts of elites. The first were the moderate nationalists, the first generation of mission-school educated Africans, led by Kenyatta, themselves bred in chieftaincy lineages, often teachers and administrative clerks, who valued the European lifestyle and campaigned for a pan-ethnic nationalism in the Kenya African Union (KAU). The second group were the less well-off, more radical nationalists, who championed an ethnic-based nationalism in defence of the have-nots. These men were Christian too, with primary education often acquired in the independent schools which had prospered alongside the missions. They championed the landless and organized workers unions. Their main support bases were the squatters upcountry and the unemployed in Nairobi, where nearly half of the 70 000 African workers lost their jobs at the end of the war.[26]

Yet, despite the existence of these alternative elites, the colonial authorities failed to assuage African discontent through effective political representation. African chiefs were appointed by the colonial administration, and this invented tradition was unable to take legitimate hold since their patronage networks, facing land shortage, became increasingly exclusive. The failure of the chiefs to assert their authority and spur successful reforms led the colonial authorities to appoint young, mission-educated, African technocrats in the provincial administration and the technical departments to implement the changes

25. Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged. Britain's dirty war in Kenya and the end of the Empire*, 32; Berman and Lonsdale, *Book Two: Violence & Ethnicity*, 244-245; E. S. Atieno-Odhiambo, "The Formative Years. 1945-55," in *Decolonization and Independence in Kenya, 1940-1993*, ed. B. A. Ogot and W. R. Ochieng (London, Nairobi, Athens (OH): James Currey, E. A. E. P., Ohio University Press, 1995), 25,26; Bethwell A. Ogot, "One. Mau Mau and Nationhood. The Untold Story," in *Mau Mau & Nationhood. Arms, Authority & Narration* (Oxford, Nairobi, Athens (OH): James Currey, E. A. E. P., Ohio University Press, 2003), 8–36; John Lonsdale, "KAU's Cultures: Imaginations of Community and Constructions of Leadership in Kenya after the Second World War," *Journal of African Cultural Studies* 13, no. 1 (June 2000): 107–124; Anderson and Throup, "Africans and Agricultural Production in Colonial Kenya: The Myth of the War as a Watershed."

26. Luise White, *The Comforts of Home: Prostitution in Colonial Nairobi* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 147; Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged. Britain's dirty war in Kenya and the end of the Empire*, 11-.

in the reserves.[27] In political institutions where African representatives sat, the British preferred to appoint the men who better fit their own administrative system, rather than those who belonged to African regimes of authority and legitimacy. The opening of the Legislative Council to Africans, with a seat in 1944 and another one two years later, favoured those who best matched the idea that the government had of honest, educated, able and upright African representatives: Eliud Mathu was a school teacher, an Alliance High School Old Boy and a Balliol man while Beneah Apolo Ohanga, a civil servant, was also an Alliance alumnus.[28] None had much knowledge of the nature of the crisis in the reserves. The educated, moderate leaders of the Kenya African Union were unable to build up significant support, outflanked as they were by more radical elements. From 1948 at least, among the squatters and the urban poor, the practice of oathing, often forcibly administered, increasingly bound the discontents to secrecy and a commitment to violent actions. Violence increased, fuelled by a mix of opportunistic criminality and disorganized political action.[29]

II. Unorthodox Founding Members

Among the measures taken by Mitchell to calm racial tensions in the colony, a South-African expert, Dr Reinhalt Jones, was invited to Nairobi. He was the director of the South African Institute of Race Relations, a research centre he had founded in 1929 to promote better relationships between the races.[30] A conference was held in 1946, gathering administrators, European members of the Legislative Council and a few African nominated members of the Nairobi City Council. There, the idea arose for a Kenyan equivalent of the Institute of Race Relations to organize conferences and propose some documentation. This first project was soon forgotten, as the Colonial Office preferred to foster a more inclusive, cultural initiative.[31] Nevertheless, the conference attendants had also shown great interest in the Durban International Club, a former hotel that had become a multiracial club and welcomed both Europeans and educated Africans. The conference inspired the formation of the United Kenya Club, which was to be something in between these projects: both a social and study place, dedicated to the betterment of race relations in the colony.

Despite being a club, the UKC was conceived as an experiment and described in scientific terms. Issues such as politics, honour, dignity and status were never thought relevant for the betterment of race relations. Founding a club –rather than an institute– allowed the project to be a private entity supported with discretion by the administration

27. Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged. Britain's dirty war in Kenya and the end of the Empire*, 33.
28. Berman, *Control & Crisis in Colonial Kenya. The Dialectic of Domination*, 313-314.
29. Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged. Britain's dirty war in Kenya and the end of the Empire*, 30, 42.
30. Muriel Horrell, *A Survey of Race Relations in South Africa* (1953), 3.
31. Frost, *Race Against Time. Human Relations and Politics in Kenya before Independence*, 69-70.

and from which it was free to withdraw. The Race Relations Club, soon renamed the United Kenya Club, was officially founded on July 24, 1946 in Nairobi by a group of European and Africans. They were atypical individuals, marginals as regards to the racial community they presumably belonged to. The birth of the club owed much to Thomas Askwith, who was then the municipal African affairs officer in Nairobi.[32] Born in 1911, a Cambridge graduate in engineering, he had been a famous oarsman of the Peterhouse Boat Club, representing Great Britain twice at the Olympic Games. In Kenya, he started as many in the Provincial Administration and served in several districts before being appointed in Nairobi just after the Second World War. He was then supervising the Municipal African Advisory Council, comprised of nominated African members, which had a consultative role in the elaboration of municipal policies.

Among the founding members was also Shirley Victor Cooke, a much older man than Askwith, who had come to Kenya in the early 1920s to serve in the provincial administration. A maverick Irish, independent in his administrative style, he had moved to Tanganyika in 1937 after having been blamed for overstepping his hierarchy, exposing an illegal land grabbing affair from which northern Kenya settlers had benefited.[33] He entered politics a year after and was elected to represent the Coast at the Legislative Council where he advocated for African representation in the assembly. Bill Kirkaldy Willis was born in Surrey in 1914 and was also a Cambridge graduate in medicine. He had come to Kenya in 1941 as an orthopaedic surgeon and a missionary. Major Kendall Ward was the executive director of the Elector's Union, a new party formed in 1944 which defended European interests, beyond the settlers' circles. It advocated for the country's independence under a European government, the best option, its activists thought, to foster African progress under white supervision.

Ernest Vasey, the son of an actress, was born in 1901 in West Midlands, left school at the age of 12 and then worked, among other jobs, as a shoemaker and a news vendor. He joined the Tory party in the 1920 where he attracted attention as an excellent speaker, before becoming the Shrewsbury MP. Visiting Kenya in 1937, he decided to settle there and found a job as a manager in the Bata shoes factory. He did not give up politics and was elected municipal counsellor of Nairobi in 1938, and then mayor in 1941. He was also a firm advocate of African representation in municipal politics. He was eventually elected a member of the Legislative Council in 1945. Charles Mortimer, a Methodist pastor, joined the administration as commissioner for local government, lands and settlement. Derek Erskine, an Etonian and Sandhurst alumni, had the atypical role of being the owner of Nairobi's largest grocery store. Others founding members were civil servants.

32. For a biography of Askwith, see : Tom Askwith, *From Mau Mau to Harambee: memoirs and memoranda of colonial Kenya*, ed. Joanna Lewis, vol. 17 (Cambridge: Cambridge African Monographs Series, 1995), 1-26.

33. Gavaghan, *Of Lions and Dung Beetles. A "Man in the Middle" of Colonial Administration in Kenya*, 249; Berman, *Control & Crisis in Colonial Kenya. The Dialectic of Domination*, 121.

Tom Colchester, for instance, came from the provincial administration, before assisting Askwith as the Nairobi City African Affairs Officer; Hyde Clark was the Commissioner for Labour.

These men knew Africans and had worked with them. They were aware of the humiliations that the colour bar caused to the latter, especially for graduates, teachers and civil servants. As such, they were convinced that it was in the interest of the administration to hire and promote them. Most Europeans who supported the club, settlers as well as administrators, were nonetheless far from conceding the possibility of an independent African government. These considered their role to be socializing Africans to the standards of British civilization of which refinements, they thought, remained unsurpassed. Promoting their moral and material progress was the best way to ensure their deference to colonial authority, especially since power was shared with the best of them. In their view, progress was only desirable provided it would preserve the internal cohesion of African communities. The answer to racial tensions was to give educated Africans a chance to play a role in the development of the colony. Strong social institutions, it was thought, would socialize them to values they could best serve. However, the content and implementation of this "development" was not supposed to be discussed.[34] In any case, these views seemed liberal in comparison to those of the majority of settlers and colonial administrators. The Europeans, for the most part, feared that any social progress regarding African communities would result in instability, corruption and disorder.

Others had more practical reasons to support UKC. Vasey's wife was a Jew, and thus unwanted in most European clubs. Israel Somen, who became Nairobi's mayor in 1957 experienced similar discrimination. Joan and John Karmali, who were involved in the club's affairs from their arrival in Kenya in 1946, were a mixed couple. John was of Indian origin and Joan a Welsh woman; their daily life was made particularly complicated by the racial bar.[35] All had an interest in developing an institution that could cater to all races, and there was no such place in Nairobi. They were encouraged by the authorities, both in London and Nairobi. The latter understood racial tensions as an issue of inter-personal relationships; it could only be answered by the promotion of mutual understanding and respect.[36] The formation of club was nonetheless, to most Europeans, an eccentric initiative, even a radical transgression. It reflected the personalities of its founding members.

Their main concern was to recruit African members who would fit the club's standards. The Africans who appeared on the UKC's first list of members were, for the most

34. Dane Kennedy writes about "liberal-paternalism": Dane K. Kennedy, "Constructing the Colonial Myth of Mau Mau," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 25, no. 2 (1992): 242, 247.

35. Many of these difficulties are detailed in Joan's autobiographical account of Hospital Hill Primary School, the first establishment of its kind in Kenya to welcome pupils of all races, Joan Karmali, *A School in Kenya: Hospital Hill, 1949-1973* (Upton on Severn: Square One Publications, 2002).

36. Berman, *Control & Crisis in Colonial Kenya. The Dialectic of Domination*, 330.

part, civil servants or moderate politicians involved in the Kenya African Union, including nominated members of the Nairobi City Council and the LegCo. Their political activism was limited since the KAU was at best considered a channel to African opinion by European administrators. It remained tolerated only as long as it stayed "apolitical".[37] Many civil servants were involved in this organization, although they did not have the right to stand for official positions. For the greater part, they worked for the European officials who formed the core of UKC's founding members, especially Askwith and Colchester. They were their subordinates and assistants in the Nairobi municipality offices. To take a few examples, Dedan Githegi was Askwith's right-hand man as assistant African affairs officer while John Muchura served in the Labour Department. The profile of the KAU activists who joined the UKC was homogeneous in terms of education, generation and occupation. Many were Alliance Old Boys and LegCo representatives, like Eliud Mathu, Beneah Oganga or Fanuel Walter Odede. A few were journalists, like WWW Awori and Francis Khamisi, the chief editor of *Baraza*, a kiswahili newspaper and his colleague Musa Amalemba.[38] Others were officials or elected members of the Nairobi Municipal Council, like SO Josiah who had served in the provincial administration or Muchohi Gikonyo. Most sat on the Nairobi African Advisory Council, like EK Binns who was also a civil servant and the KAU representative for the Coast or Bethwell Mareka Gecaga. KAU's moderate politicians perceived UKC as an opportunity to pass on their claims to European officials; most took their membership with that goal in mind. The UKC's membership was thus based on pre-existing social and professional bonds in the Nairobi City Council, the Municipal African Advisory Council or the Legislative Council. Since most members already knew each other, the club offered the possibility to develop a different kind of tie. They expected it to be less formal and less paternalistic than at the working place.

The United Kenya Club was formed to foster relationships between Europeans and Africans.[39] Yet several Asians insisted on joining the club and being recognized as founding members: B.M. Chaddah, K.V. Adajala were doctors; C. Kiparam was a chemist; Eboo Pirbhaan Ismaili businessman and a former taxi driver, close to the Aga Khan, who had made a fortune in running a petrol station, and then a transport company. Ibrahim Nathoo, also an Ismaili, was Kenya's only dental surgeon, who had a strong interest in educational policies, an involvement which was determinant in his 1944 nomination to the LegCo. RC Datoo ran a glass factory; most Asians, though, were professionals: S.M. Akram and Satish Gautama were lawyers; A.R. Danji was a certified public accountant.[40]

37. John Spencer, *KAU. The Kenya African Union* (Londres, Boston, Melbourne: Kegan Paul International Limited, 1985), 129.

38. Henry Muoria, *Writing for Kenya. The Life and Works of Henry Muoria*, ed. Wangari Muoria-Sal et al., African Sources for African History (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2009), 72.

39. Race Relations Club, Minutes of the First Annual General Meeting, 24/07/1948, KNA MSS 111/7, S.V. Cooke papers, 1944-66.

40. UKC's list of members, with admission dates, can be found in The United Kenya Club, Nairobi. List of Members At 1 Mar 1951, KNA (MAA) 1/5/265, United Kenya Club.

Jains and Ismailis, by contrast with Hindus and Sikhs, were over-represented, reflecting in Kenya the consequences of the partition of India.

From the beginning, Sir Philip Mitchell had served as the club president. This was an honorary title, but the government's support of the UKC made this patronage more significant than in many other clubs. The UKC benefited from direct subventions and the government guaranteed its loans. This help proved crucial when the club grew and had to find a plot to build new premises. Until the early 1950s, the club met in premises rented from the Boy Scouts Association. It prospered quickly; the membership reached 175 members in 1947, 325 four years later.[41] Yet everyday sociability at the club was lifeless. The luncheons attracted at best a dozen members and the Wednesday diners with conferences, between thirty and forty people.[42] In many respects, the UKC was a singular club. Its status, public funding and the multiracial nature of its membership meant that it was commonly perceived as a civic association, rather than a club.[43]. Moreover, the UKC promoted a kind of social tie that was unusual in other clubs, which were based on like-minded sociability. By contrast, the groups that the UKC gathered had very little in common.

III. The Implications of Belonging

By the late 1940s, supporting the UKC was not a trivial stance. It resounded as a commitment in a colony where racial belonging was one's predominant attribute, an identity that determined all social relations. The European members therefore referred to the UKC as a non-racial institution. Shirley Victor Cooke declared that the idea of a non-racial club was unpopular; its members were considered suspect by "extremists of all races". An African leader criticized the paternalism of Europeans members while a European member of the LegCo accused them of sedition.[44] The African members, nonetheless, suffered most of the social scorn attached to their membership. Tom Askwith, the club's first chairman, writes in his recollections:

> We Europeans rather expected to be subjects of obloquy among certain sections of the white community when we joined, but I am afraid it never occurred to me that Africans often suffered the same fate. They would be referred to as black Europeans, traitors to the cause of African independence, whereas in the case of Europeans it was more a suggestion, though equally wounding, of

41. Minutes of the Second Annual General Meeting, 23/03/1948; List of members..., KNA (MAA) 2/5/265 United Kenya Club

42. Minutes...,*ibid.*, KNA (MAA) 2/5/265.

43. For instance, the official booklet for the celebrations of the city status for Nairobi mentions the UKC among the "associations", albeit all the other clubs appearing under their proper denomination, East African Standard, ed., *The Nairobi Charter Celebrations in Pictures* (Nairobi, 1950).

44. Press cutting, "Letter to the Editor, by S.V. Cooke",*The East African Standard* undated –probably 1959– KNA MSS 111/66, S.V. Cooke, Statements and letters.

> letting one's side down. In the case of Asians it was, I think, different and they were more concerned that their wives might be confronted with what they regarded as the laxity of Western society.[45]

Beneah Apolo Ohanga suffered to be treated as a "white man's toady".[46] European members ignored these criticisms since they had no knowledge of the political stakes that divided Africans. They wanted to make the club a place of equals, yet they dominated it. The wage gap between Europeans and African was huge since salaries in the public service were defined on a racial basis. Moreover, Europeans bore most of the club's expenses. They paid higher entry fees and subscriptions; they acted as trustees of the government's loans. The idea of the club was theirs since Africans had never experienced a similar pattern of sociability before. All members were meant to have comparable practices of intimacy and domesticity. Africans were expected to adhere to a mode of socializing that excluded political debates and negotiations; the club's third rule –"The Club shall be non-political"– was explicit. Since the problem of race relations was defined in cultural terms, the UKC's answer was to ban politics. It came along with other policies that aimed at reducing racial prejudices while ignoring their political dimension: the Kenya National Theatre, the East African Conservatoire of Music, the British Council.[47]

Professional hierarchies permeated club relations. They increased the European domination over the club's affairs and sociability. Askwith, for instance, proposed several of his juniors for membership. Professional subordination became moral patronage; religion too played a role. Several European missionaries participated in the UKC and used it to extend their Christian patronage over African members. For instance, Bill Kirkaldy Willis advised many Africans on religious matters. Bethwell Mareka Gecaga, who worked with him –they co-edited a gĩkũyũ grammar– called him his "adoptive father".[48] During the Emergency, as Gecaga left Kenya to study overseas, the Erskine welcomed his spouse and their two children in their Nairobi manor.[49]

From its beginnings, the club served to socialize Africans to a peculiar form of social exchange; the Europeans thought it would foster communication between all races. The relations between Europeans and Africans were expected to lie primarily in politeness and good manners. Giving a speech at the club in June 1952, that he called "Part of the answer ?", the colony's native affairs commissioner, stated:

> [...] we are up against something that every single man, woman and child of any race or sex in this country can assist with, and that is the need for ordinary good manners, and I do not mean by that knowing how to use a knife and fork correctly ; I mean a man's attitude to, and arising from his attitude,

45. Askwith, *From Mau Mau to Harambee: memoirs and memoranda of colonial Kenya*, 50.
46. Ibid., 53.
47. Frost, *Race Against Time. Human Relations and Politics in Kenya before Independence*, 70-75; Frost, *Enigmatic Proconsul. Sir Philip Mitchell and the Twilight of Empire*, 212.
48. Askwith, *From Mau Mau to Harambee: memoirs and memoranda of colonial Kenya*, 50.
49. Karmali, *A School in Kenya: Hospital Hill, 1949-1973*, 114-115.

> his behaviour to his fellow men. This affects relations between parents and children and children and parents ; it affects the way you drive a car ; it affects the shopkeeper and customer ; it affects the employer and the employee ; it affects the young and the old, and of course it affects men and women, and I believe that much could be done towards the everyday improvement of these race relations, particularly in towns by an improvement in manners, and I am not talking only of the attitude of the European to the African, but equally of the African's attitude to Europeans and to Asians and of the Asian's attitude to the European and the African.
>
> […] I would humbly suggest that we should all have to go a long way to find a better guide in this matter than the motto of one of the oldest schools in England, which runs — MANNERS MAKE THE MAN.[50]

European paternalism aside, African commitment to and support of the institution should not be underestimated. Several chiefs, whose authority and patronage lay with the colonial state and on access to its resources, adhered to it. Among them, Chief Ruriga from Embu, Chief Waruhiu wa Kunu and Chief Magugu Waweru, both from Kiambu.[51] More generally, the second colonial occupation offered for the first time the opportunity for educated Africans to hold administrative positions and to be appointed to councils and committees. KAU members thought they were an advanced elite; they sought to legitimate themselves before the colonial authorities and to gain popular support from their mediation.[52] A UKC membership confirmed this status and was a mark of respectability, even if their African holders were only recognized by a marginal set of white liberal administrators.

Notably, however, several KAU leaders did not take part in UKC. Jomo Kenyatta and Oginga Odinga never joined; Eliud Mathu resigned quickly. Several factors explain their reluctance. In his memoirs, Tom Askwith remembers that, in 1947, Jomo Kenyatta, who was just back from England, came to the club at the invitation of Dedan Githegi while railway workers prepared a strike:

> Discussions […] did take place between Jomo and some of the senior members of the United Kenya Club, but although I was the chairman I could not as a civil servant participate. Hugh LaFontaine, a former head of the administration, who was also a founding member of the club, was their prime mover, but they got nowhere. Jomo obviously wanted talks to take place at a much higher level, but he did by his presence indicate that he wished to negotiate. The Government was presumably equally determined no to do so.[53]

Since it soon became clear that the club would reject any form of political expression and negotiation, several African nationalists left the club and others merely refused to

50. *Part of the answer ?*, Speech of the Chief Native Commissioner at the United Kenya Club, Nairobi, June 1952, KNA (MAA) 2/5/265.
51. List of members, 1951, KNA (MAA) 1/5/265, United Kenya Club.
52. Spencer, *KAU. The Kenya African Union*, 128-129.
53. Askwith, *From Mau Mau to Harambee: memoirs and memoranda of colonial Kenya*, 48-49.

become members. None were ready to bear the political cost of such belonging, for so little a gain. The club was in fact foreign to the "deep politics" of ethnicity that tied an emerging African elite to the vernacular worlds where its authority was enunciated, legitimated and vulgarized in street and household conversations.[54] In the small ethnic nations in formation of colonial Kenya, where rights and obligations between patrons and clients were continuously debated in the context of colonial capitalism and its increasing economic inequalities, a UKC membership was a cumbersome, even a dangerous attribute.

It is more likely, however, that the club had no significance in the vernacular arenas where the authority of Kenyatta, Odinga or other leaders lay and was negotiated. They could not find in the club benefits they could invest in other arenas. Several years later, this disappointment can be read in Eliud Mathu's words, who justified his resignation by describing the club as a "humbug to divert us – eating with a few white people".[55]

A few other nationalists stayed, like Tom Mbotela, Francis Khamisi or E.K. Binns. All from the Coast, their family roots lay in Freretown and Rabai missions, where in the mid-19th century Anglican missionaries of the Church Missionary Society evangelized freed slaves. Some had taken an English name, as did E. K. Binns's ancestors, most likely in reference to the reverend Harry Binns who had led the Freretown mission during the 1880s.[56] Binns, as Jimmy Jeremiah, both civil servants, had distanced themselves from the KAU when the Government started to criticize its politicization, preferring to remain involved in trade unions only.[57]

Tom Mbotela and Francis Khamisi were both descendants of former slaves from Central Africa. They were among the best educated and the most involved in the KAU. Their political imagination was not moulded by the debates and constraints of a local ethnicity, which they regarded with contempt. Mbotela understood the tribe as a primitive, outmoded thing, a burden from which Kenyans had to free themselves.[58] Like many in the KAU, their criticism of colonialism was constitutional. They accused the colonial state of not offering equal rights to black and white subjects. As others before them, they referred to the principles of the British Monarchy to protect them against the excesses of colo-

54. A term used by Lonsdale, who defines it, after Peter Dale Scott, as "the negotiated relationship between politics 'high' and 'low' [It] is the domain of moral narrative. It is where people imagine, and dispute, the reasons for honouring or breaking their reciprocal demands upon each other, from on high or low", : Lonsdale, "KAU's Cultures: Imaginations of Community and Constructions of Leadership in Kenya after the Second World War," 112; See also: John Lonsdale, "Political accountability in African history," in *Political domination in Africa. Reflections on the limit of power*, ed. Patrick Chabal (Londres: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 128, 130.

55. Jack R. Roelker, *Mathu of Kenya. A Political Study* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Publications, 1976), 119.

56. Colin Reed, *Pastors, Partners & Paternalists. African Church Leaders & Western Missionaries in the Anglican Church in Kenya, 1850-1900* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1997), 131.

57. Spencer, *KAU. The Kenya African Union*, 135.

58. Lonsdale, "KAU's Cultures: Imaginations of Community and Constructions of Leadership in Kenya after the Second World War," 121.

nialism.[59] This was a type of criticism common among teachers and civil servants. It did not forestall the enjoyment of the promotions and individual recognitions allowed by the second colonial occupation. Rooted in Christianity, faith and a mission apprenticeship did much to fuel African attachment to European lifestyles and, by extension, to the UKC and some of its members. It was precisely this attachment that sustained their criticism of colonialism as an unfair rule as regards to Christian standards of compassion.[60] For Mbotela and Khamisi, the UKC opened a space where they could talk about standards of citizenship and authority, in an institution whose membership was first defined by profession and education, rather than ethnicity.

IV. An Impossible Sociability

The UKC membership formed an heterogeneous community, far more than any existing social club in the colony. It was an awkward place, caught between its multiracial ideals and the discomfort of members who had so little in common. The first years were difficult and the lack of funding forced its members to gather in run-down premises, cheaply rented from the Boys Scouts Association. It was a rather spartan, austere place. The catering and service were organized on a voluntary basis because the club did not have the wherewithal to hire staff. Many European members complained about the quality of meals.[61] The standard of service, then, was well below the Parklands or Nairobi Clubs, not to mention the Muthaigas.

Apart from the particular nature of its membership, sports and alcohol distinguished the UKC. By contrast, European and Asian clubs were explicitly dedicated to alcohol consumption. This required an official licence: importing and selling drinks to Africans was strictly controlled. The authorities only granted the right to provide the natives with beer and wine in 1947. Nonetheless, the prohibition of alcohol on UKC premises owed as much to the colony laws as to the club committee itself. Alcohol contradicted its moral project; the delicacy of multiracial sociability imposed to keep one's self-control. In his speech to the members in June 1952, the Chief Native Commissioner declared:

> The decent, law-abiding and respectable African citizen says "Why in earth should not I be able to have a whiskey and soda like anybody else", and from that query and the fact that he cannot, he argues that a wicked Government, a British one, has it in for him in some mysterious way. Now a moment's honest

59. Lonsdale, "KAU's Cultures: Imaginations of Community and Constructions of Leadership in Kenya after the Second World War," 121; Lonsdale, "Ornamental Constitutionalism in Africa: Kenyatta and the Two Queens."

60. See for instance, in Tom Mbotela's case: Joseph B. Harris, *Recollections of James Mbotela* (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1977), 75.

61. Madatally Manji, *Memoirs of a Biscuit Baron* (Nairobi: Kenway Publications, 1995), 157; Julius Simiyu Nabende, "The History of the United Kenya Club, 1946 to 1963" (master's thesis, University of Nairobi, Department of History, 1990), 49.

> thought on the subject and a little longer memory could not fail to enable that individual to appreciate that immense harm could be done by making spirits easily and legally available in this city. I do not want to labor this point, but a very brief study of murder cases which have come before the courts in this country in the last ten years would convince anyone of the potential dangers of alcohol.[62]

However, in 1953, the topic was much discussed at the annual General Meeting. Many wished to request from the administration licensure for selling all sorts of alcoholic drinks, as well as tobacco and cigarettes. They proposed to go beyond the 1947 legislation and to request a special authorization from the governor. The African members of UKC were said to be civilized enough to consume drinks forbidden to ordinary blacks. The committee wanted to be sure of the majority's support for such a decision. Thus, it wrote to all members, attaching the letter it intended to send to the governor. The document is ample evidence of how the contradictions of the colonial situation shaped the everyday life of its subjects. The first argument raised by the author was that Africans who studied in London could enjoy, through the East Africa House, a club offering all kinds of alcoholic beverages, a privilege they could no longer enjoy when back in Kenya. The letter pointed out the contradictions inherent to the colony's liquor policies, as "native" status did not allow for the possibility that the sufficiently civilized could enjoy the privileges of all civilized men:

> We know that from the earliest times in Kenya it has been the wise policy of Government to protect a backward and indigenous population from the evils of alcoholic excess, and yet we feel that this protection, in so far as it involves a complete prohibition of social drinking on licensed premises, has served its original purpose, and consideration might now be given to a general relaxation of the Law. […] The members of the Committee are very anxious that the United Kenya Club should develop along the lines of a British Social Club for ladies and gentlemen, and it has become more and more noticeable during the past year that in the absence of a bar the Club is empty at "sundowner" time, which is the particular time of the day when Kenya citizens of all races seek relaxation in friendly conversation and social recreation, such as chess or bridge.
>
> Suggestions have been put forward that we should ask only for a non-spirituous bar licence, but on further consideration it seems clear that nothing short of the total removal of discrimination in regard to social drinking would conform with the ideals of our Club.
>
> If Your Excellency can see your way to initiating the necessary legislation to permit of the issue of a full Liquor Licence to the United Kenya Club, we, the members of he Management Committee, would give our assurance that this experiment would be carefully controlled under Rules framed on the lines of

62. *Part of the answer ?*, speech of the Chief Native Commissioner to the United Kenya Club, June 1952, KNA (MAA) 2/5/265.

those obtaining at East Africa House.[63]

The committee justified the right to consume alcohol by the tight privacy of the club's premises. It guaranteed that the Africans who would benefit from a liquor licence were no less "citizens" than their peers of all races. Implicitly, it established a direct link between civic capacity and freedom to drink, both being subject to virtuous restraint. It reflected the lifestyle of desirable citizens.

Heretofore, the club was hardly patronized by its members. Many Europeans had adhered in sympathy to the project and the ideals it carried, but did not come or participate in any other way. The secretary had to send many letters reminding pending members that they had to come to the club to be introduced to the balloting committee in order to be elected.[64] To encourage members' participation, sociability at the club was much more scheduled and organized than was usual in other clubs. It took place on Tuesdays' "social" evenings, when members could converse and on Wednesday's "weekly luncheons", when a speech was given by a member or a guest. In the minds of the club's founders, these presentations had a cultural purpose and contributed to fostering race relations and mutual understanding. Sir Philip Mitchell, during a speech at the 1949 AGM, could then declare that it was "foolish to pretend that all men were equal and it was essential that they should recognise their difference and seek to understand and appreciate them".[65]

Yet luncheons and speeches hardly alleviated the awkwardness felt by many members. Wage inequalities contributed to many of these feelings. In the civil service, Africans did not enjoy the same salary scales as Europeans and Asians.[66] The founding members had kept low the entry fees and subscriptions to compensate for this gap. New members paid a five-shilling entrance fee, and an annual subscription of twenty shillings.[67] By comparison, Karen Country Club members paid a hundred shillings in entry fees and 120 shillings for their subscriptions. The Muthaiga Country Club charged seventy-five shillings as a 1952 entrance fee.[68] The will to keep the fees low for Africans created a persistent discomfort among the latter. Most of them had similar, if not higher degrees than many European and Asian members, yet their living conditions were far worse. The club crudely displayed these inequalities. European and Asian domination over the club was reinforced by the necessity to raise funds to build new premises. African members were too poor to contribute significantly while the European and Asian fund-raisers were celebrated at the club on a gilded board of honour. The whole operation seemed like a

63. The Secretary, S.H Shamsi to Sir Evelyn Baring, Governor, draft letter, letter to UKC members, 14/05/1953, KNA (MAA) 2/5/265.

64. See for instance, Secretary, UKC to Reverend Scott Dickson, 22/04/1948, KNA MSS 3/19.

65. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting, 25/01/1949, KNA MSS 3/19.

66. Frost, *Race Against Time. Human Relations and Politics in Kenya before Independence*, 71.

67. Minutes of the annual general meeting, 25/01/1949, KNA (MAA) 2/5/265 ; Rules of the United Kenya Club, 1946, Appendice I, Nabende, "The History of the United Kenya Club, 1946 to 1963."

68. D. White and C. White, *Karen Country Club: The First Fifty Years* (Nairobi, 1987), 14; Mills, *Muthaiga. Vol I, 1913-60*, 173.

charity toward the former. Tom Askwith, writing to the chief native commissioner, did not hide then that the UKC had become a financial burden for its Europeans members:

> The burden of £6,000 [required to erect the new premises]on the club is going to be very heavy because obviously the African community are not rich, and many of us would regard it as unfortunate if the Indian community, who are in the best position to do so, paid more than their fair share. In consequence the burden upon the European members is going to be very heavy and we are all going to do our best. It must be realized, however, that from the European point of view it is largely a labour of love as most of the members in point of fact frequent other clubs.[69]

Discomforts was not only a financial affair. According to Peter Wright, who was an active member of the club since the early 1950s:

> Amongst a small tri-racial nucleus of members there was a genuine and warm friendship and these members enjoyed visiting each other in their homes. With them race seemed to count for very little. But the great majority of members met only at the organized meetings, were very polite to each other as acquaintances and that was all. The real friendship and camaraderie and understanding were lacking. [...] The smallness of the African membership of the club was also puzzling. Most of the African members were either in Government service or worked for European firms, some of them as journalists. They were very pleasant and intelligent people and they were certainly an asset to the club. But it was hard to understand why so many other Africans, who could easily have afforded the very moderate membership fee of £1 a year, did not join, especially businessmen and others who were independent of Government service. Some club members said that Africans were suspicious of the club: there were, they felt, too many European civil servants who were members and they were afraid that if they too joined, their friends would suspect them of becoming government "yes-men" or of seeking to gain the favour of the executives of European companies. A deep rooted distrust appeared to be the prime cause of the poor African membership. That this was in fact true became very clear later when I tried to persuade other African friends to join the club. The reaction was very unfortunate for it meant that those Europeans and Indians who were genuinely anxious to learn what the African viewpoint really was, had very limited opportunities of finding out even in the club.[70]

The cultural gap between members was the source of much clumsiness and of a persistent discomfort in gathering groups who did not share any self-evident reciprocal behaviours. Moreover, Africans and Asians had their own divisions, social idioms of honour, respectability, sociability, domesticity and vernacular languages, which hardened the formation of a common ground, in so intimate an institution. Tom Askwith recalled how he realized that Asians, for instance, had different standards in terms of gender relationships:

69. Tom Askwith to P. Wyn-Harris, 29/05/1948; KNA (Maa) 2/5/265.

70. Excerpt from a forthcoming Peter Wright biography, prepared in Oxford by Victor Lal. Correspondence with the author, January 6th, 2009.

> They were more concerned that their wives might be confronted with what they regarded as the laxity of Western society. But we all learned from each other. I remember being very impressed by a charming young Asian doctor and his wife. They were obviously devoted to each other. When we first met I asked him conversationally when they had first met, and, obviously embarrassed, he admitted that it was on their wedding day.[71]

Europeans often came to the club in couples, while African men came alone. Culinary practices varied as well, and the food, cooked by European women, was for many a discovery as much as a constraint. Relationships between the communities were asymmetrical and contributed paradoxically to reproduce racial belonging in a domestic space that revealed its most embodied, intimate dimensions. The institution exposed, through many instances awkwardness and beyond official categories, what race owed to deep socialization, a set of silent dispositions, tastes and distastes, attitudes, all reinforced by decades of a colonialism entirely based on such distinctions.

Ernest Vasey, in a 1953 speech to the club, told members what to him made race real, and how he found it hard to fight the colour bar since it took into account intimate matters such as hygiene and sanitary standards. The disappearance of racial discrimination was then rather a question of behaviour, than of legislation. The many humiliations of the colour bar could well be damaging to its victims, and one could only relinquish it by civilizing them properly:

> One has to realize that looking at his problems and outlook a great number of farmers never meet any Asians other than the, shall I say, 'dukawalla'[72], the illiterate type of Asian who concentrated in the small trade of our economy, fulfilling a most important part in this Colony, but who does not represent the cultural or social level which a typical European settler would mix. The only Africans that the great majority of the European farmer/settler meets is the Nyapara[73] of his labour ; he does not meet the advancing African that we do in towns and therefore he has a somewhat different picture of the changing circumstances. […] There must be respect for each other and that respect cannot come from one race alone; it must be respect for and recognition of our different customs and habits. To a European Public Health standards are one of the things that have the greatest impact on his mind. Very often when one travels on the Mombasa train where conveniences are open to all races the manner in which those conveniences are left is to a European most disturbing and upsetting, and, believe me, the failure to realise the impact of different sanitary customs can do just as much harm from the non-European side as that absurd discourtesy which influences the non-European in his impression of the European with that tendency to judge a community by the impressions given by a few. I have, of course, heard people talk about the hotel question and I don't propose to touch upon that particular aspect, but as one who

71. Askwith, *From Mau Mau to Harambee: memoirs and memoranda of colonial Kenya*, 50.
72. As were termed the petty shopkeepers.
73. The foremen, on European farms.

> has always believed that we should get together I still don't believe that we shall achieve these things by regulation and laws but by the admittedly slow process of changing the attitude of people to each other.[74]

Despite the substantial goodwill displayed by the founding members, the search for a common ground for the different communities and their respective cultures proved to be uneasy. Furthermore, the set of conferences proposed by the club for its weekly luncheons did not satisfy most members. Only a few involved themselves in the daily life and management of club activities, outside the limited circle of its founding members. Despite the committee's efforts to attract more Africans, they never represented more than a quarter of the whole membership before independence.[75] Richard Frost, who was the head of the British Council in Nairobi, remarked that in 1952, the UKC had almost become an Asian Club.[76] The Mau Mau war and its fierce repression, the curfew in Nairobi, the risks it involved for any African, including moderates and loyalists, put an end to their presence.

Asian members, however, joined the club in numbers. Many had a lot to gain from the maintenance of British domination, especially if multi-racialism had become a reality. Madatally Manji, the "biscuit baron", the businessman Manu Chandaria or N.S. Mangat, the chairman of the Kenyan branch of the Indian Congress. The Asian presence developed along with an increase in their civic commitments; a political and union activism institutionally linked to organizations in India and rooted in Kenya by the long struggle for their recognition against the European hegemony. The most prosperous Asians had long involved themselves in charity, anxious to justify their presence despite an uncertain future.[77] By the mid-1950s, Asian involvement in UKC accompanied their wider participation in civic and charity associations, in a period of great political turmoil and change, while their status in the colonial hierarchy had never been so uncertain.

V. Mau Mau and the Emergency

In 1952, when Sir Philip Mitchell left Kenya, multiracialism had shown itself to be a blatant failure. Settlers had been able to keep their privileges while Africans had been denied any satisfying political representation. As violence extended in Nairobi and in the reserves, settlers pushed the Kenya government to ban the KAU, which they thought was responsible for the agitation, and for a state of emergency to be declared. When Mitchell's

74. Address given by Mr E.A. Vasey to the United Kenya Club on Tuesday, August 11th, 1953, at 5.30 p.m. RHO MSS, non catalogued item, box 1, f.4, Correspondence 1953. The Vasey records at Rhodes House have two different origins, one just having been transferred from SOAS -formerly PP MS 48-, the other still being un-catalogued. This is the latter that is quoted here.

75. Nabende, "The History of the United Kenya Club, 1946 to 1963," 62.

76. Frost, *Race Against Time. Human Relations and Politics in Kenya before Independence*, 71.

77. See Chapter 2 in: Robert G. Gregory, *The Rise and Fall of Philanthropy in East Africa. The Asian Contribution* (New Brunswick, Londres: Transaction Publishers, 1992), 43-67.

successor, Sir Evelyn Baring, arrived in Kenya in September 1952, political unrest had already reached a point of no return, with the killing of many Africans who opposed the Mau Mau, especially those in government service. The oath-takings quickly expanded in Central Province, whose main commitment was to fight the colonial government and reject anything European. On October 7th, 1952, Chief Waruhiu wa Kungu, from Kiambu, the Central Province Paramount Chief, was assassinated.[78] Less than two weeks later, Baring, with London's approval, declared a state of emergency in Kenya. King's African Rifles battalions and British regiments converged to Kenya, while the Special Branch proceeded with the arrest of more than a hundred nationalist activists, both moderate and radical, including Kenyatta. The Special Branch's main mistake was to misrepresent the Mau Mau as a direct emanation of the KAU. It arrested all the leaders of the latter; while in fact the KAU, lead by moderate nationalists, had little to do with it. Mau Mau, in turn, led by radical elements, started a guerilla war in the mountains of the Central Province and in Nairobi.[79]

In Nairobi, Mau Mau activists were hostile to those Africans who had embraced the cultural symbols of European domination. Teachers and civil servants were mocked and nicknamed "tai tai" –those who worn the tie– and persecuted.[80] Mbotela was among those who were targeted. He blamed in the harshest words the Mau Mau for their ethnic chauvinism and the contempt they displayed towards status, education and legitimate authority. For him, nationalism should have addressed all Kenyans, and not only the Kikuyu, that the Mau Mau oath only united in violence and unlawful activities.[81] Mbotela left a KAU that, he thought, had been corrupted by their influence. Within the party, he had long opposed the radical nationalists, supporters of violence and radical action. With Muchohi Gikonyo, they had fought them in Nairobi, during the strikes the latter had organized in 1950.

A first murder attempt targeted both municipal councillors; Mbotela managed to escape, but Gikonyo suffered an injury to his arm.[82] On November 26th, 1952, less than a month after the onset of the Emergency, as he came back from a reception at the city hall, Tom Mbotela was less lucky. His slashed body was found in a Shauri Moyo gutter, in the eastern part of Nairobi. Muchohi Gikonyo was targeted a few days later, but managed to escape.[83] According to Tom Askwith, Mbotela was "probably too much of an inter-racialist for the stomach of some nationalists".[84] The possibility that he could have testified at Kenyatta's trial might have played a role in his assassination, as the

78. Incidentally, Waruhiu was also a UKC member.
79. Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged. Britain's dirty war in Kenya and the end of the Empire*, 56-68.
80. Ibid., 190-200.
81. Harris, *Recollections of James Mbotela*, 77-78; Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged. Britain's dirty war in Kenya and the end of the Empire*, 190-191.
82. Harris, *Recollections of James Mbotela*, 80.
83. Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged. Britain's dirty war in Kenya and the end of the Empire*, 191.
84. Askwith, *From Mau Mau to Harambee: memoirs and memoranda of colonial Kenya*, 52.

fact that he was a member of the Nairobi African Advisory Council.[85] Mbotela, Gikonyo and Khamisi's association with the UKC and the corresponding lifestyle led them to be mocked and targeted.

The British response to Mau Mau was, by all standards, exceptionally brutal and disproportionate to the threat they represented. The fighters were largely disorganized, had no coherent plans, few firearms, and with the wave of arrests that followed the declaration of the Emergency, were deprived of any coordinated authority.[86] Although the colonial authorities refused to call Mau Mau a war, several British elite regiments were sent to Kenya and with the King's African Rifles were placed under military command, while the Provincial Administration controlled an auxiliary force of around 15 000 loyalists called the Home Guard and 8 600 Tribal Police officers.[87] Against the combatants hidden in the forests around Mount Kenya and the Aberdare Range, the Royal Air Force dropped 50 000 tons of bombs. The British authorities were convinced that Nairobi was the rear operating base for the forest fighters, and in April 1954 launched Operation Anvil, during which security forces sealed Nairobi and sent the 50 000 Kikuyu they found in temporary detention camps. Then the latter were "screened" by the police and the Home Guard, and more than 24 000 Kikuyu males suspected to be involved with Mau Mau were deprived of their rights and put in detention without trial; many others, especially women and children, were forcibly deported back to the reserves.[88] In upcountry Kenya, from 1954, the repression took the form of forced villagization, while more than one million Kikuyu were deported into fortified townships as a measure to further isolate the Mau Mau. Although the guerillas were almost completely defeated by 1956, the state of emergency lasted until 1960, allowing the Provincial Administration to reassert its discretionary prerogatives over native affairs.[89] The use of extra-judicial detention, punishment and torture was generalized; at the peak of the repression in 1954, more than 71 000 Kikuyu were detained, of which 8 000 women, and around 150 000 in all during the war, usually for three to five years.[90] Because the colonial authorities thought Mau Mau reflected a mental instability and a reversion to savagery, the purpose of this system of detention camps, which has been described as comparable to the Gulag, was to "rehabilitate" the fighters into proper civilization. After they confessed their participation in the rebellion, detainees were "cleansed" through counter-oathing, and could then engage in educative programs of rehabilitation, which could take the shape of forced labour, before being

85. On the targetting of Municipal African Advisory Council members by Mau Mau activists, see: Berman, *Control & Crisis in Colonial Kenya. The Dialectic of Domination*, 335.

86. Berman and Lonsdale, *Book Two: Violence & Ethnicity*, 252.

87. Daniel Branch, *Defeating Mau Mau, Creating Kenya. Counterinsurgency, Civil War, and Decolonization* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 111.

88. Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged. Britain's dirty war in Kenya and the end of the Empire*, 200-212.

89. Berman and Lonsdale, *Book Two: Violence & Ethnicity*, 252-261.

90. Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged. Britain's dirty war in Kenya and the end of the Empire*, 313.

eventually released.[91] The refusal of many detainees to confess or repudiate their allegiance led to prolonged detentions, and further acts of violence and torture. Tom Askwith, who since 1949 had been the commissioner for community development, was in charge of this "rehabilitation" process, supervising 120 administrative officers and 240 Kikuyu elders in fifty-three camps. Furthermore, of all imperial powers engaged in a colonial war, none used capital punishment to the extent the British did in Kenya during the Mau Mau war; 1499 Kikuyu were sentenced to death and one thousand were eventually hanged.[92] As a whole, 11 000 Mau Mau were killed in action, against 164 soldiers on the British side.[93]

In the United Kenya Club and beyond, Europeans were unanimous in blaming the Mau Mau. The great majority understood the movement as a degeneration of the Kikuyu tribe, which had not been able to sustain itself against the increasing pressures of modernity.[94] Yet, all did not agree on the ways to fight it. Most settlers thought a white, independent government was inevitable for the eradication of the Mau Mau and the containment of any forms of African nationalism. In Nairobi however, the liberal minority and progressive administrators were more balanced. Agreeing with Askwith, they saw Mau Mau as a transition crisis, which was best answered through the re-education of Africans as modern, civilized men. It was, eventually and in the long run, the only way to secure both London's support to the colony and African acceptance of British presence.[95] This is why UKC's members, as a whole, agreed with the colonial administration's repressive policies as regards to the Mau Mau. Yet being a European member of the UKC could also fuel the suspicion of the authorities. Peter Wright, a teacher, was deported from the colony. He was suspected of having been in secret contact with Kenyatta in 1952. In London, nonetheless, many suggested that his main crime was to have developed

91. Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged. Britain's dirty war in Kenya and the end of the Empire*, 284; Berman, *Control & Crisis in Colonial Kenya. The Dialectic of Domination*, 359-361; Askwith, *From Mau Mau to Harambee: memoirs and memoranda of colonial Kenya*, 110-122.

92. Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged. Britain's dirty war in Kenya and the end of the Empire*, 291-292.

93. Mau Mau's repression has been the topic of several books in the past decade. On violence, and the extra-judicial aspect of counter-insurgency, see especially the Chapter 7 in: Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged. Britain's dirty war in Kenya and the end of the Empire*, 289-307; Another book, published the same year, is more controversial Caroline Elkins, *Imperial Reckoning: The Untold Story of Britain's Gulag in Kenya* (New York: Henry Holt, 2005), Its manichaean narrative of the conflict, and fanciful estimation of the number of casualties, has been widely criticized, despite the term *gulag* deemed relevant by many (see for instance Anderson, *op. cit.*, pp.315-316.) On these criticisms, see respectively: Bethwell A. Ogot, "Britain's Gulag (review)," *The Journal of African History* 46, no. 3 (November 2005): 493–505; as well as John Blacker, "The demography of Mau Mau: fertility and mortality in Kenya in the 1950s: a demographer's viewpoint," *African Affairs* 106, no. 423 (2007): 205–277; D. Elstein has brought an interesting contribution on Mau Mau casualties in: David Elstein, "Tell me where I'm wrong (Letters)," *London Review of Books* 27, no. 11 (June 2005), `http://www.lrb.co.uk/v27/n11/letters#2`; and David Elstein, "The End of the Mau Mau," *The New York Review of Books* 52, no. 11 (June 2005), `http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2005/jun/23/the-end-of-the-mau-mau/`; A good summary of the controversy can be found in the introduction to: Branch, *Defeating Mau Mau, Creating Kenya. Counterinsurgency, Civil War, and Decolonization*, xiv-xvi.

94. Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged. Britain's dirty war in Kenya and the end of the Empire*, 112, 280.

95. Berman and Lonsdale, *Book Two: Violence & Ethnicity*, 285-286.

excessively familiar ties with Africans and Asians.[96]

As a whole, the UKC suffered a great deal from the Emergency. The institution and its social project had lost much of its significance with the war. The membership almost collapsed and the small set of founding members was in despair. Attacks against the institution increased, mostly from the settlers. They saw in Mau Mau the proof that multi-racialism was a dangerous ideology; the raw natives had grown too fast and now believed they were their masters' equals, at the price of a bloody war. In 1954, the *Sunday Post* published a column against the club, titled "Multiracialism on trial", pointing the many difficulties it faced by then:

> African and European membership has dropped recently [...] But neither extremist politics nor Emergency conditions are wholly to blame. Many members unaffected by either of these reasons blame apathy among members and lack of enterprise on the part of Club officials. No real effort is made to arrange attractive programmes, and members? interest is waning. The club atmosphere is lacking. After last week interesting talk by the new Indian Commissioner in East Africa, Mr Gopala Menon, on Malaya, one member told the *Sunday Post* that too few of the talks arranged came up to such standard. There was a tendency, he said, to give members anything in the way of talks that was available, without regard to what was suitable and interesting to members. Examples taken from the November and December programme hardly have an inspiring appeal. There will be, for instance, talks on recruiting and training staff for a large department, control on "signaling developments" on the construction of marine craft, and on road services. The choice of these subjects has surely been made because an expert on them is available, and not because officials really believe they will pack out the club with hundreds of people vitally interested in signalling or marine craft. Another member told the *Sunday Post* he felt more attention should be given to instructive talks dealing with traditions and customs of different races. [...] In the past, he added, talks have been given on subjects which would have bored fourth-form schoolboys. [...] In their October report, club officials referred to "complaints that apart from speeches there is no other club activity" What was their reaction? It was to ask members to come forward and start discussions groups, study circles, bridge, chess, and table tennis. One member was willing to run a dance club, and others have sent in suggestions. But volunteers are still awaited, according to the November report. [...] In other words, has multiracialism a "popular" appeal to ordinary folk of all races? Have they really any common interest?[97]

Despite its obvious bias, the journalist underscored many of the UKC's paradoxes. There was no spontaneity in the gathering of different people in so intimate a place. Sociability at the club was an affair of proposals and injunctions: bridge and chess, games and dances, bantering conversations never seemed to materialize. All was proposed and scheduled. The founding members' clique was criticized for its grip on the committee, but there were

96. H. Swanzy, "Quaterly Notes," *African Affairs* 52, no. 206 (1952): 16.
97. *The Sunday Post*, 14/11/1954, KNA GH 7/26.

few eager to serve the club and renew its direction. More importantly, cultural goodwill was not enough of an answer to issues which were, above all, political in nature.

VI. A More Equal Sociability

Military repression was only one part of the answer to the Mau Mau. From 1954, counterinsurgency also took the shape of what Governor Evelyn Baring called the "second prong", whose goal was to reward African loyalists with land and labour opportunities, in order to foster the formation of a class of respectable yeomen who could best protect British interests in the colony. Its most salient feature, the Swynnerton Plan, involved a considerable agrarian reform of land surveying, consolidation and allocation, in order to provide title deeds where there used to be customary tenancy. A crucial point in these reforms was that they were made at the expense of Mau Mau detainees and convicts. The few who had land tenancies saw it being denied and seized. Confiscated plots were re-allocated at public meetings, rewarding those whose loyalty to the colonial administration was beyond doubt. Besides the re-allocation of land, the scheme aimed at increasing the value of African cash-crop production, by granting credits and export licences for small scale tea and coffee plantations. New jobs opportunities were also offered to loyalists; licences to brew or cut timber opened avenues of accumulation that up to then were denied to Africans. While in October 1956 Dedan Kimathi, the last remaining Mau Mau leader, was captured, the Swynnerton plan had already triggered the formation of an African landed elite and a supporting agricultural labour class.[98] This was supplemented by an increase of African employment in government service.[99] In 1953, the Lidbury report had advised an abolition of racial discrimination in wages and housing. Although not directly linked to counter-insurgency, this recommendation was implemented a year later. In the public service, salaries were no longer defined by race; public and private companies soon followed. By the mid-1950s, thanks to wage parity, a small number of Africans started to enjoy European standards of living.

UKC's evolution reflected such changes. By 1955, the club was still largely supported by Askwith's Community Development Office. With only a handful of Africans left, it was multiracial in name only. The committee began to think about the institution's future. Members who did not pay their subscription that year were struck off; they counted more than two hundred. Hassan Nathoo, who held the secretary's office, explained in a letter to Ernest Vasey, who had become the colony's Finance Minister, the Committee's views on the club's future:

> It seems to us that the time has now come for a radical change in the club's

98. Branch, *Defeating Mau Mau, Creating Kenya. Counterinsurgency, Civil War, and Decolonization*, 117-147.

99. Clayton and Savage, *Government and Labour in Kenya, 1895-1963*, 375-377.

> policy. From the time of its foundation in 1946 until the present, because the purpose of the club was to provide a social meeting-ground for members of all races, it has been felt necessary to keep all charges low and to provide amenities only on a minimum standard so that membership was within reach of African pockets. […] But while this was the only possible policy for an inter-racial club in the past, it is no longer successful. The formal functions with guest-speakers on Tuesdays and Wednesdays still attract small groups of members, mainly Asian ; and even smaller group, mainly Europeans, uses the club for lunch on weekdays ; but our active African membership, which was never very large, has dwindled almost to nothing. The main reason, we suspect, is that our African members are conscious that charges at the club have been kept low mainly for their benefit, and resent this as a form of patronization ; while the few Africans in leading positions in the country, since the reforms which followed the Salaries Commission Report, want and can afford amenities on a much higher standard than the club can at present provide. We therefore intend to give up the hopeless quest for a large African membership. We aim at a proper residential club with all usual facilities, a small resident salaries staff, and an economic rate of subscription and other charges. We accept the implication that our African members will remain few for some time, but we are hopeful that they will be the outstanding men and women of their community. We know that a large body of European and Asian members want this change and are prepared to pay higher charges, and will in fact use the club more when the new plan is put into effect.[100]

The club was reformed two years later. Entrance fees were multiplied by eight and subscriptions tripled to reach the level of European clubs. The funds were allocated to an extension of the club's premises, with a dining room, a bar and a residency wing. A skilled staff was eventually hired. This, somehow, changed the nature of the club. For the first time, the club was serviced by a subordinated staff, from whom no familiarity was expected. It no longer ran on a voluntary basis beholden to the goodwill of the members' wives.

The club attracted new members. The committee's policy was to welcome former African students on their return from abroad; it was successful in that regard. Lawrence Sagini, a civil servant in the department of Education, Duncan Ndegwa, who worked as a statistician for the East Africa High Commission, the lawyer Sam N. Waruhiu, who taught law at the newly built Royal Technical College, Charles Njonjo, also a lawyer, all joined the club when returning from their university years abroad. They came from Allegheny College in the United States, St Andrews in Scotland, University College Wales at Aberystwyth, Fort Hare in South Africa and Exeter, all of them being either Alliance or Mang'u alumni. The club was the sole place where they could meet, while enjoying a degree of comfort similar to what they had known abroad.

The levelling of sociability allowed for connivances that hitherto had been peculiar to European clubs. The Kikuyu Duncan Ndegwa, returning from Scotland in 1956, found

100. H. Nathoo, Secretary to Ernest Vasey, 20/06/1955, KNA AB 17/28.

his country in ashes. His wage as a statistician was much higher than what he earned five years earlier as a teacher, wages he termed a "bribe to buy [his]goodwill".[101] At the UKC he met Derek Erskine and Ernest Vasey, the latter who had become a government minister, and transferred him to the post of assistant to the secretary general of the treasury.[102]

The new spirit of the club fostered an elective approach, no longer paternalistic, to politics and to race relations between Europeans and Africans. In 1953, Ernest Vasey, then the Minister for Finance, had laid the foundation of such approach with a speech at the club called "After Emergency". The talk emphasized once again the importance of a meeting place for the best representatives of each race. A Kenyan citizenship, he said, was to be rooted in land and housing property in order to lessen racial and ethnic belonging, so harmful to the establishment of a proper democracy. Sport was no longer a guarantee of imperial loyalty:

> I heard in this room stressed not so long ago the value of sport as one of the things that combine together. I would like to say that I am very doubtful of the wisdom of some of the sport contests that we hold. I think to have an Asian versus European cricket, tennis or hockey match does not do this country any service at all because I think that however liberal and tolerant you may be, when you see members of your community being beaten you must be more than human not to feel for the people of your own kind. I doubt whether the people of Kenya, and I speak particularly from my knowledge of Africans, have a loyalty to Kenya as Kenya, and it is important that we start building that up. That is one of the reasons why in pushing an African housing policy in Kenya I have always pressed for people to be given the chance of owning their own property. Breaking no confidence I should like to put on record that for many years I have fought for 'Woodley[103]' to be to be a tenant-purchase scheme; I don't want 200 tenants, I want 200 citizens. That is why I have fought for Asian housing tenant-purchase schemes so that they have a sense of belonging, and that is why in African housing I have pushed for the greatest amount of building to be based on an African owning his own house in urban areas. Once he has the same difficulties and privileges as ourselves and has a sense of belonging to Nairobi then you can expect him to become a stable citizen of a town and country.

Vasey went on, trying to define how to organize citizenship in a country where cohabited men no longer to be considered of different races, but of different levels of civic competence:

> I think we shall have to find, even of the racial compartments are left for the time being, we have to find some basis of common responsibility. There is, of course, the thought of the common roll. The obvious danger of the common roll which makes everyone pay lip service to it but why very few people believe

101. Duncan N. Ndegwa, *Walking in Kenyatta Struggles. My Story* (Nairobi: Kenya Leadership Institute, 2006), 235.
102. Ibid., 238.
103. A housing estate in Western Nairobi, next to the Ngong racecourse.

> in it in their heart is that if you counted heads you would know you would be overwhelmed by an electorate not competent to decide what is good for the Colony and would, in the early stages, vote for everything black. […] We know, of course, that one of the answers would be a roll with a very high property and education qualification. But if that is used for always pushing the qualification one step further up the ladder the more people try to climb the ladder, then it would be worse than elections with the present system when you have to find a measure of agreement amongst your top representatives. […] One thought I have had for some time is a modification of democratic government to suit our particular circumstances by trying to remove some of the fears in our communities, and that is something in the nature of the weighted vote. That would mean that certain people would have no vote at all and other people would have up to 4 votes. The people who had reached a certain standard would qualify for one vote. There would be a second vote of ownership of property on a fixed level. That would bring in your responsibility for property and therefore your contribution on a higher level as your second vote. Your third vote could surely be considered somewhere on the grounds of professional capacity in that once a man had reached a certain degree, had reached a greater level of capacity and, what is more important, a greater standard of integrity, because if he is a professional man he would have reached a higher level of knowledge. Your 4th vote would be on the level of executive responsibility. In this way, I believe we could push forward a common roll in this country open to all men, and I think that all of us who believe in democracy should think this over very much, although it only brings us forward to a limited degree.[104]

In the colony where race relations remained tense, the UKC was for many a haven, where members tried to imagine a Kenya yet to come. Wage parity, albeit unevenly implemented, allowed for a more equal sociability in the club. According to Charles Njonjo, in 1960, the club was one of the rare places where this was possible:

> There was nowhere else to go. I could not go to Muthaiga, I could not go to Nairobi Club. [the atmosphere was] very very friendly, it was a haven. A place where really you could go, and be yourself, both Europeans and Africans. You were free, they didn't pretend to be anything but what they were, and you treated the other persons as human beings, as equals, you were not patronized, you were not looked down upon, you were not feeling like if an European member was doing you a favor or anything like that, you just felt that … this is a place where we all meet and contribute what we could for the fresh air we were making.[105]

Closer friendships were cemented. Mohamedally Rattansi regularly organized diners, where he invited the Erskines, the Vaseys and the Karmalis.[106] On these occasions, the guest list illustrated the different segments of an elite in formation: Charles Njonjo and

104. Transcript of an Address given by Mr E.A. Vasey to the United Kenya Club on Tuesday, August 11th, 1953, at 5.30 p.m. RHO MSS Vasey box 1 f.4, Correspondence 1953.
105. Interview, Charles Njonjo, 25/05/2008.
106. Karmali, *A School in Kenya: Hospital Hill, 1949-1973*, 117.

Njiri Kariuki, both foreign-educated sons of colonial chiefs, the latter's father having led the Home Guard against the Mau Mau in Murang'a; Dr. Njoroge Mungai, Kenyatta's cousin and a Stanford graduate, Julius Gikonyo Kiano who had studied political science in Berkeley and Stanford and later Tom Mboya, on his return from Oxford.[107] An education at Alliance High School and a university abroad, especially in the US, a well as a wedding with an Afro-American woman unified the Kikuyu and Luo elite beyond the diversity of their geographical origins. The end of the 1950s saw the emergence of a young African elite, nationalist but moderate, which thanks to the support of their European forefathers slowly integrated the state apparatus. Its increasing prominence was correlated with the victory over the Mau Mau and the crushing of radical nationalists. However this did not prevent these Africans from criticizing colonial rule, to which they opposed a constitutionalist nationalism.

VII. Multiracial Politics

From the outset, the European founders of the club had highlighted the dangers of bringing in politics through the door. The rules were clear against such evil. The UKC was built upon the notion that a common sociability between the most eminent representatives of all races would assuage political tensions in the colony. It was necessary, as in any club, to avoid any dispute related to public affairs. However, because of the colour bar, controversies and grievances between the different communities had nowhere else where they could be openly aired and settled. In 1951, a group of European politicians and UKC members started the Kenya Citizens Association, after Jomo Kenyatta and Peter Koinange had warned them of the likelihood of an African rebellion.[108] It was deemed urgent to accelerate multiracial cooperation and, above all, at a political level. The Kenya Citizen Association (KCA) was created in consequence, under the patronage of Peter Koinange. It was expected to foster political discussions between Europeans and Africans.[109] Chief Waruhiu, Ambose Ofafa, the Luo Union's treasurer, Ibrahim Nathoo, Ernest Vasey, Tom Askwith were involved, as was Derek Erskine, who was its first president. The association dealt with UKC's failure to manage political dissent by opening a multiracial space of political debate. The club became a rallying point for KCA members and a place where political discussion was welcomed.

The KCA's functioning was curtailed by the Emergency; however, the politicization of the UKC had begun. While fuelling the renewal of African interest, it caused divisions

107. For details on these curricula, see: Jim C. Harper, *Western-Educated Elites in Kenya, 1900-1963. The African American Factor* (New York, Oxford: Routledge, 2006).
108. Kenya National Assembly Official Record –Hansard, 12/04-22/06 1960, p.1616.
109. Its official role was to "provid[e]a forum for debate and discussion wherein persons of all races can seek common ground in current affairs", Kenya Citizens Association. An Analysis of its purpose, 20/08/1952, MSS 111/27, S.V. Cooke papers: Miscellaneous

among the European members. Ernest Vasey and Derek Erskine encouraged politicization. Both had a growing influence over the committee. Vasey became its chairman in 1954. The club speeches became increasingly militant in tone. Asian members seem to have been the most vehement. The private status of the institution allowed for a freedom of speech that only a few other places could permit. In August 1953, NS Mangat advocated for the opening of the White Highlands to non-Europeans. A few months later, the lawyer Chanan Singh criticized the permanent contradiction between human rights as they were implemented in Great Britain and what seemed to be their non-applicability in Kenya. Ernest Vasey spoke several times against the colour bar.[110] The club was slowly becoming a place where a constitutional criticism of colonialism was expressed. As a consequence, several founding members broke with the UKC. SV Cooke left the club in anger, harshly criticizing Vasey and Erskine in the press, whom he accused of deviating from the club's original goals.[111] Elected at the LegCo, he advocated for the end of public subsidies to the UKC.[112] Tom Askwith also resigned, saying his membership was no longer compatible with the expected neutrality of a civil servant.

The constitutional evolutions of the colony framed these speeches and debates. In the aftermath of the 1954 Lyttleton Constitution, which recognized multiracialism, elections were organized in 1957 at which Africans, for the first time, were to be elected to the LegCo at par with the other races. Lead by Tom Mboya, they nonetheless refused this compromise, claiming that their demographic weight should allow them more representatives. They twice rejected multiracialism as proposed in the Lyttleton and, three years later, the Lennox-Boyd constitutions. The latter designated more seats for Africans, but they were still to be elected according to racial rolls. In 1958, the successive failures of these compromises forced Vasey to resign from his position as minister for finances.

Even if the Mau Mau had been defeated, the state of emergency had not been lifted. The Hola camp massacre, in 1959, worsened the Empire's image in the British public opinion. The camp, located in Northern Kenya, was dedicated to the incarceration of hardcore Mau Mau militants. After eleven detainees were clubbed to death, and despite a gross cover up by the Kenyan Administration, the House of Commons debated the accident in July 1959. Both Labour and Tory MPs expressed the unacceptability of the detention conditions in Kenya's camps, and rejected the state-sponsored, arbitrary violence that the Mau Mau war had rendered common.[113] These events proved fatal to the Empire in Kenya. They opened the way for the Lancaster House Conferences, where independence would be negotiated. New elections to the LegCo were scheduled for 1960.[114]

110. Nabende, "The History of the United Kenya Club, 1946 to 1963," 70-85.
111. Letter from SV Cooke to the East African Standard, 6/10/1958, KNA MSS 111/66, SV Cooke: Statements and letters.
112. Kenya National Assembly Official Record (Hansard) : 12 april – 22 june 1960, pp. 1785-1786.
113. Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged. Britain's dirty war in Kenya and the end of the Empire*, 325-327.
114. Bethwell A. Ogot, "The Decisive Years: 1956-63," in *Decolonization and Independance in Kenya, 1940-93* (Oxford: James Currey, 1995), 58-60; Bennett, *Kenya A Political History. The Colonial Period*,

As the multiracial idea lost its appeal and credibility, nationalist speeches became the norm among UKC's members and invited speakers. The club removed the "multiracial" word from its constitution from 1957. The same year, Oginga Odinga came to talk to members about racism, and the necessity of eradicating it in the colony. He criticized the idea that a multiracial constitution could put an end to discriminations. Rather, non-discriminatory schools could better improve race relations. Tom Mboya, then a very young leader, emphasized that a constitution should be free of racial prejudice and called upon Europeans to become ordinary Kenyan citizens among others. He "warned Europeans who might wish to set themselves up as an obstacle in the way of African aspirations and constitutional development that, if they appeared to constitute such an obstacle in African eyes, they would cause a great deal of trouble, and would do more harm to themselves than to the Africans".[115] Ernest Vasey spoke against European exclusivity in the White Highlands, while the conflict raged over the settlement of the Christian, multiracial St Julian's community in Limuru.[116] Gradually, speeches overtly discussed the idea of an independent country under an African government. They questioned the future of the different racial communities in this Kenya-to-come. In 1960, Vasey recalled the role played by Europeans and Asians in the making of the country, in front of a membership which gathered many young, ambitious African graduates. He called upon the latter to leave Europeans a place, whatever was to be the future of the colony.[117] In the early 1950s, speeches at the club mostly expressed grievances toward the European representatives of the colonial administration; less than ten years later, Europeans and Asians addressed the future leaders of a free country.

The attitude of Asian members also changed. The negotiations over multiracialism and the forthcoming independence divided the Asian community. Hindu politicians were eager to criticize the European presence in Kenya. These supported the most radical voices among Africans. From August 1954 the Kenyan branch of the Indian National Congress had asked for the support of the Indian government to end the emergency, and for the Africans to gain their independence, as Indians had had several years earlier.[118] NS Mangat, the chairman, claimed that Asian allegiance was to India rather than to the British colonial authorities. Sikhs and Goans did not agree. The Ismailis, hostile to the Hindu, preferred to assert their allegiance to the Kenyan government. Yet these divisions were not only framed by community belonging; Goan leaders, for instance, were also highly divided over these issues.

The UKC was the theatre of these conflicts and divisions. They regarded the nature of

142-145.

115. "Mr. Mboya's Warning to Kenya Europeans", *The Times*, March 10, 1960.

116. RHO MSS Micr. Afr. s. 598, St Julian's Community, Frost, *Race Against Time. Human Relations and Politics in Kenya before Independence*, 231-246.

117. Nabende, "The History of the United Kenya Club, 1946 to 1963," 70-85.

118. Frost, *Race Against Time. Human Relations and Politics in Kenya before Independence*, 226-227.

citizenship and the status of racial communities in an independent Kenya, within a constitutional criticism of decolonization. The club had become a place of "racial bargaining"; leaders of each race tried to negotiate the most beneficial compromise for their community in the forthcoming independence.[119] One of the most striking examples of those negotiations took place in 1960. A conference was organized at the club, gathering Fritz de Souza –the Goan, pro-independence leader of the Kenya Freedom Party– JM Nazareth –also a Goan, and a LegCo member–, Masinde Muliro –an African, elected to the LegCo in 1957– who was opposed to Munyua Waiyaki –a doctor, who in Nairobi chaired the Kenya African National Union, dominated by Luo and Kikuyu leaders; Michael Blundell, leader of the European "liberals" of the New Kenya Group, was also present. The conference was organized with the prospect of the next elections to the LegCo. Nazareth and DeSouza disagreed on the attitude to adopt toward African nationalism, as regards to Asian interests.[120] Nazareth joined the European liberals in their elective conception of citizenship, criticizing both the egoism of African leaders and the immaturity of their followers:

> The main misfortune of Kenya at present as I see it, is that its leadership has not been able to rise to the need. The principal defect is that the leaders are too-self-centered or too blind to see the need of our times or else too weak to be able to meet it. [In Kenya], as Ghana, Nigeria, Somalia and so many instances have shown, Britain, before the country can dispense with outsider even in the civil service, is only too anxious to part with rulership, if by so doing she does not hand her dependant territories to disaster and chaos and into the hands of power-seeking politicians whose divisions in an atmosphere of tribalism may result in economic tragedy and the loss of political liberty. The circumstances, therefore, in which power is transferred from Britain to Kenya are all important, important not only to the minority races, but even more to the African majority, whose liberties and welfare are involved on a much vaster scale. It is of utmost importance to devise a constitution for Kenya, which will stand up to the strain of an immature electorate.[121]

Nazareth eventually called for constitutional mechanisms and the maintenance of law and order, to guarantee the safety and the well-being of the Kenyan population as a whole, especially the minorities. His fears were also fuelled by the will to support the non-alignment of the newly-emancipated colony, as did India in the Cold War context. Educated elites, he ended, whatever their race, had to act as trustees of the wider population.

Despite the will of its founding members, the club ended up welcoming political speeches. These concerned citizenship and civic participation. Their arguments were

119. The expression "racial bargaining" is borrowed from Donald Rothschild, *Racial Bargaining in Independant Kenya. A Study of Minorities and Decolonization* (Londres, New York, Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1973), See, especially, chapter iv. Nabende also uses it, Nabende, "The History of the United Kenya Club, 1946 to 1963," 99.

120. On the conference see: J.M. Nazareth, *Brown Man Black Country. A Peep into Kenya's Freedon Struggle* (New Delhi: Tidings Publications, 1981), 425-426.

121. "My speech at the United Kenya Club on September 27, 1960", ibid., 533-535.

shaped by the changing balance of power between the colonial authorities, Asian activists and African nationalists. UKC's conferences were marked by opposition between African nationalists, who argued that their demographic weight should have led to an African-ruled country, and the European and Asian minorities, whose interests led to defend a civic participation based on a qualified citizenship. The latter disregarded the African electorate; they thought it was unable to vote wisely, and should be protected from its opportunistic leaders. Civic capacity increasingly became a cultural attribute rather than a racial one and, more and more, UKC promoted this idea. While Mau Mau were being crushed in the Aberdares forests, the club aimed at gathering a selected membership of all races, who were deemed worthy of participating in public affairs.

European and Asian speeches at the UKC reflect the great plasticity of racism in late colonial states. The leading minorities of 1950s Kenya justified their domination in cultural terms, far more explicitly than they had before. The UKC was a multi-racial place only because it restricted its membership to a handful of people whose education and profession allowed to escape the determinisms of their skin colour. Citizenship and political participation concerned all Europeans, a majority of wealthy Asians, but never the *dukawalla*, hard-working, illiterate traders, as well as a tiny minority of educated Africans. These Africans were expected to be sufficiently exceptional to be able to assimilate European customs and standards, and to be eventually considered at par with the latter.

This phenomenon was not peculiar to Kenya. It happened in most colonial empires. In the French Empire, naturalizations, access to nationality and citizenship were only granted to exceptional individuals, whose degree of assimilation to French customs was considered sufficient. Social status and prestige mattered more than revenue and occupation.[122] The colonial hierarchies and categories referred to complex and changing combinations of race and class.[123] The colonial order never gave way to a strict, inflexible domination; it rather allowed for many compromises between African aspirations and the conservatism of the ruling minorities. When Africans started to acquire school qualifications and university degrees, especially in Britain and America, this disrupted colonial

122. Emmanuelle Saada, "Une nationalité par degré. Civilité et citoyenneté en situation coloniale," in *L'Esclavage, la colonisation, et après... France, Ètats-Unis, Grande-Bretagne*, ed. Patrick Weil and Stéphane Dufoix (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2005), 202, 213; Laure Blevis, in her study on naturalizations in colonial Algeria, came to similar conclusions: Laure Blévis, "La Citoyenneté française au miroir de la colonisation : Ètude des demandes de naturalisation des "sujets français" en Algérie coloniale," in "Sujets d'Empire," *Genèses* (53 2003): 25–47; The malleability of racism in terms of access to citizenship has also been underlined by D. Deschamps: in the French trading posts of India, the inscription of natives on electoral rolls was determined by a series of cultural criteria. The civic capacity was then rather defined as an aptitude to serve the state, as well as law and order Damien Deschamps, "Une citoyenneté différée : sens civique et assimilation des indigènes dans les Ètablissements français de l'Inde," *Revue française de science politique* 47 (1 1997): 49–69.

123. Emmanuelle Saada, "Un Racisme de l'expansion. Les discriminations raciales au reagrd des situations coloniales," in *De la question sociale à la question raciale ? Représenter la société française*, ed. Èric Fassin and Didier Fassin (Paris: La Découverte, 2006), 60.

hierarchies.[124] The everyday production of difference in colonial states proceeded from many pragmatic compromises with the law or the official practice.[125]

In Kenya, the permeability and the uncertainty of the legal apparatus which produced and maintained racial discrimination allowed an experiment like the United Kenya Club; the sanction that its members risked for their transgression was mainly social, never legal. Racial barriers were rooted in attitudes, tastes, moods; breaking them exposed one to being mocked, ostracised or sometimes killed, in the case of Africans.

At first sight, the history of the United Kenya Club seems of little importance regarding the political events of the time. Yet, its reveals different dynamics at work in the formation of African elites in Kenya at the time of Independence. Africans had different attitudes towards the club. In all cases, however, these attitudes were ambivalent. In the unsettled and uncertain times of the 1950s, membership never constituted a singular allegiance, an unconditional conversion to the European lifestyle or to the policies proposed by the colonial authorities. This was because Africans rarely conceived their belonging to these institutions as a mark of allegiance to European domination. The same holds true for the "loyalists" who fought the Mau Mau with the British in Kikuyu-land. Their relationship to the colonial power and authorities was always ambiguous. The UKC was only a theatre among others, with its particular stakes, customs and style of civility. Its non-European members were, at the same time, engaged in other arenas: those peculiar to trade unions, the professions, religion, family, local politics, each with its own peculiar patterns of respectability, its idioms and debates, its particular moral economy. These arenas were not necessarily contradictory, even if moving between these places and using them required some political acumen.[126] African elites were already practising the "straddling" between different positions of authority, power, and accumulation; between different spheres of political legitimacy.[127] The history of the UKC and similar associations reflects how African and Asian elites used what was already the institutional legacy of British colonialism in order to better negotiate, in the racial terms peculiar to these institutions, the best possible position in the state apparatus.

124. See for instance in Francophone Africa the case of William Ponty graduates: Jean-Hervé Jézéquel, "Grammaire de la distinction coloniale. L'organisation des cadres de l'enseignement en Afrique occidentale française (1903-fin des années 1930)," *Genèses* 4 (69 2007): 4–25.

125. This is particularly well demonstrated in: Saada, "Un Racisme de l'expansion. Les discriminations raciales au reagrd des situations coloniales," 67.

126. Benjamin Kipkorir shows, from the cases of Kyale Mwendwa and Nathaniel Siganga, both edicated at Alliance High School, these permanent moves between traditional societies and the world of administrations and missions: Kipkorir, "The Alliance High School and the Making of the Kenya African Elite. 1926-1962," 110-113.

127. The concept of *straddling* was first elaborated by: Michael Cowen and Kabiru Kinyanjui, *Some problems of capital and class in Kenya*, Occasional Paper 26 (Nairobi: Institute for Development Studies, University of Nairobi, 1977), in order to describes elites tendencies of cross-positioning between public and private sectors. I use it here in a slightly different sense. For a generalization beyond the Kenyan case, see: `http://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/795`; Jean-François Bayart, *L'État en Afrique. La politique du ventre* (Paris: Fayard, 1989), 98-99.

While all sorts of nationalists discussed the content of a future citizenship, Tom Askwith had long left the club, as had SV Cooke, Bill Kirkaldy Willis or Kendall Ward. Contrariwise, most of the African founding members stayed: in 1960, John Muchura had been elected to the LegCo, as had Musa Amalemba; Bethwell Gecaga had married Dr Njoroge Mungai's sister, Jomo Kenyatta's cousin. Independence was not so much the "triumph of the system" than the victory of the Africans who learned to use it.[128] While the radical nationalists had been ruthlessly crushed during the Emergency, their defeat had made room for a constitutional nationalism to emerge, suitable to negotiate independence with the British. The constitutionalists who had adopted a lifestyle and a type of criticism compatible with the structures of the colonial state were the most efficient nationalists. These knew best how to use the contradictions between the alleged universality of its civilizing standards and the racial inequalities of colonial domination. The practice of a European style of sociability had become compatible with these claims.

The history of the UKC illustrates how, in 1940s Kenya, racial hierarchies had become entwined in the day-to-day, in the sphere of the intimate or in sociability, beyond written norms and oral injunctions. It also shows the fragility and uncertainties of these hierarchies, and their many exceptions. In the chosen company of the UKC, racial distinction became vulnerable. A few friendships were struck up, where race did not seem to matter much, at least as a hierarchical order. More generally, the club did much to reduce racial prejudice in the colony. It was central to the formation of a wider institutional network, whose action went beyond the political arena. Several of its members –the Karmalis, in particular and for obvious reasons, but also Ibrahim Nathoo, Ernest Vasey, Dedan Githegi, Bethwell Gecaga, Manu Chandaria– were engaged in the creation of Kenya's first non-racial school, the Hospital Hill Primary School. Such a school was not forbidden and its foundation shows that racism in the colony went beyond the legal apparatus and was, above all, defended by a set of white radical associations. If the governor encouraged them in their educative activities, the East African Women's League did much to sabotage its foundation.[129] However, in the UKC, a non-racial sociability was only made possible by the exclusion of the many individuals who did not fit the social and economic

128. Dan Branch uses this expression in order to show how African "loyalists" –i.e.on the British side during the Mau Mau war– appropriated the colonial administration and perpetuated it after independence, cf. Chapter V in: Branch, *Defeating Mau Mau, Creating Kenya. Counterinsurgency, Civil War, and Decolonization*, 148-178; see also D. Peterson's review of the book which is, as regards to these issues, particularly relevant: Derek Peterson, "D. Branch, Defeating Mau Mau, Creating Kenya (Review)," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 38, no. 2 (2010): 337–339.

129. Karmali, *A School in Kenya: Hospital Hill, 1949-1973*, 156-157.

standards the club promoted. These standards were eurocentric, and rules of admission remained uneven. The UKC expected that Europeans would be free of racial prejudice. Africans, by contrast, were expected to adopt the formers' cultural standards. Asians were expected to live up to a mixture of both. Only the first requirement was written in the club rules.

Chapter 3

Assimilation, Recognition and Exclusion

While post-war prosperity had boded well for settlers' future, the Mau Mau war deeply affected them. During the course of the Emergency, the Mau Mau guerillas killed 32 white civilians, 26 Asians, and 2000 Africans. Although this suggests that attacks on Europeans remained marginal, they altered settlers' self-confidence and furthered their segregative tendencies. The low number of white civil casualties can be explained by the fact that Mau Mau was an African civil war as much as an anti-colonial rebellion; its stakes lay in land inequalities and the foundations of legitimacy among the Kikuyu, as much as in grievances against the colonial state and the settlers. Although attacks against the settlers were limited and sporadic, they in fact had a considerable effect on them. Murders of white farmers occured almost exclusively during the first two years of the Emergency. Like the assassination of the Ruck family in 1953, which epitomized Mau Mau savagery in settlers' minds, they happened on farms and in houses. Children were murdered along with their parents. Moreover, African house servants or workers that the victims knew well had participated. These tragic events united settlers in their thirst for revenge, and in calls for direct action and indiscriminate repression against the Kikuyu. They urged the colonial authorities to implement radical measures against the legal responses that they found too slow and too weak. In the wake of the Ruck family murder, settlers organized a march to the governor's house, where they demanded retaliation.[1] Notable, however, is that the previous murder of an Italian and a Seychellois family had attracted less comment and anger. White settlers reserved their outrage for those of pure British descent, again illustrating that in the colony there were different degrees of whiteness, accorded by status and origin.[2]

A symbol of white privilege, European clubs were not spared by Mau Mau guerillas. At the beginning of the Emergency, a gang of forty-one had burnt to the ground the Nyeri Polo Club where, a few months earlier, the Duke of Edinburgh had played a game, that the future Queen attended[3]. Less than two years later, on 21st August 1954, ten Mau Mau assailants penetrated the kitchen of the Sigona Golf Club and beheaded its

1. Frost, *Race Against Time. Human Relations and Politics in Kenya before Independence*, 25.
2. Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged. Britain's dirty war in Kenya and the end of the Empire*, 90-93.
3. "Polo Club Burnt Down", Oct. 21, 1952, *The Times*, p.6.

sixty-year-old secretary, W. Berkeley Matthews, while he was having dinner.[4] Yet while the radical nationalist guerilla was ruthlessly repressed, the promotion of African loyalists fostered the development of an elite which could enjoy the same salaries and lifestyle as the Europeans. African advancement caused the latter to question the undercurrents of segregation. Because state formation in Kenya had linked cultural attributes and political legitimacy, these changes also challenged the complex interplay of status, segregation, intimacy and political recognition on which Kenya's clubland had been laid.

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I. Segregation & Distinction in Urban Clubland

Kenya's clubland was shaped by the new wave of Europeans migrants who arrived in the aftermath of the Second World War. By contrast with the previous generations, the great majority of newcomers had minimal qualifications and little capital. While very few farmers came, the European urban population grew, reaching 17 000 inhabitants, of which 11 800 stayed in Nairobi. The balance of European migration was in excess of two to three thousand from 1946 on, and until the Emergency. This evolution led to racial tension in the job market, with a low-skilled white collar class that competed with educated Asians and Africans for junior and commercial positions. The insecurity of European status in the cities led to a strong opposition to all policies that would have fostered African advancement. In the town of Kitale in western Kenya for instance, which was mostly populated by this new wave of white migrants, the Town Council opposed the building of social amenities for Africans, to the point that in 1952 there was not even a social hall for them, a common feature elsewhere.[5] This new class of migrants and an influx of African in towns, whose low wages and lack of housing fuelled resentment, reaffirmed the twofold dynamics of racial integration and status differentiation that drove European urban sociability.

Sir Philip Mitchell, who thought the colour bar was the main obstacle to multiracial cooperation, faced strong opposition. He called a conference to improve race relations, launched the building of a cultural centre and the National Theatre, as well as the East African Conservatoire of Music, all multi-racial institutions. But during his mandate his calls for a better cooperation between African and European farmers were short-lived, with the Kenya National Farmers Union only opening its doors to African membership in 1956, four years after his departure and seven after he had organized a tea party for both sides of the farming community to work together.[6] Beyond these social initiatives, Mitchell was powerless, since the bar was completely informal. This form of blatant racism

4. Ann Hughes, 25/08/1956, CAP CAS 127 Kenya Branch.
5. Frost, *Race Against Time. Human Relations and Politics in Kenya before Independence*, 26-28.
6. Ibid., 71-75.

seemed anachronistic as regards to the greater part of the Empire. Officials who came from the India Service were surprised to find a sort of discrimination on Kenya's sport fields that no longer existed in Asia. When in 1949 the India-born Patrick Sweeney was appointed as a custom officer in Kenya, he decided to join the men's double of the Kenya Coast Tennis Championship with an Indian medical practitioner, whom he had met at school in Goa. The day after, he was asked to report to the chief immigration officer who told him "in no uncertain manner that [he] had been an embarrassment to the European community by being partnered by a non-European in the tennis championship".[7] As Sweeney recalled, the colour bar was enforced "not by law, but by implication", which he found "vicious, cruel and unwarranted".[8] His friend complained that in Kenya he was discriminated against, being refused a membership at the Mombasa Sports Club on racial grounds, and eventually left for Great Britain. This silent sense of racial segregation seemed to permeate all realms of social interaction.

Subordinated to racial belonging was a no-less-silent and interiorized understanding of status and precedence of which clubs, too, were a marker. T. W. Jenkins, a police officer, so recalled that he was categorized as a junior official and as such could not afford a club membership. However, because they were unofficial, these hierarchies, as in the case of Sweeney, had to be enforced by the offenders' superiors:

> Our social status as members of the Inspectorate was not high; we were categorized as second class officials, & as such were for example not permitted to join the Nairobi and Muthaiga Clubs, the membership of which was in the main respectively confined to first class officials & the more wealthy settlers. Although a few resented such social structures, most of us accepted them without rancour; sometimes they led to faintly amusing incidents as for instance when I was tactless enough to accept the offer of a drink in the lounge bar of Nairobi Club from the private Secretary to the Governor with whom I had been playing squash. Unfortunately a senior police officer happened to see me there & the following day I was marched before my superintendent to receive an official rebuke.[9]

Despite the apparent equality which prevailed on the squash, cricket and tennis fields, all social spaces were permeated by status hierarchies. This happened in two ways, both of which accentuated the self-segregative logics that existed before the war.

First, there was a multiplication and hierarchization of social institutions, according to a pattern that developed in Nairobi since the 1910s. In Kitale for instance, the white population was distributed between the more prestigious Kitale Club, the Kitale Sports Club for those who held the more junior positions and the Endebess Club, which rather catered to the farming community.[10] The clubs which catered to the more junior staff were

7. A Game Warden's Permit for A Corpse, The Life and Times of a Custom Officer, p. 179-181, RHO Mss Brit. Emp. s. 518, Sweeney Papers.
8. Ibid, p.181.
9. RHO Mss Afr.s 1784 (23) Law Enforcement (Kenya) T.W. Jenkins.
10. Interview with Simon Davis, Nandi Hills, 15 March 2013.

often dubbed "sports clubs", as in the Mombasa, Kitale or Eldoret, offering facilities which were allegedly more sporting than social, with an emphasis on physical exercise rather than on refined sociability. Hotels also became a popular place for the less educated and less well-off European population, especially those on temporary assignment. For instance, in the 1950s in Eldoret, the Irish community patronized the Pioneer Hotel, owned by a couple of Canadians while in Kitale, the Kitale Hotel was also praised for its dances and diners. By contrast, clubs seemed to have been a meeting place for long-standing settlers and the more successful professionals, rather than for the more recent migrants. The reason was indeed to be found in the social class to which belonged the new migrants, whose socialization less fitted these institutions, but also in the duration of stay in Kenya, which was a distinctive attribute among the whites.

Second, an internal segregation took place, with a formalization of certain cliques which existed within clubs. In Nairobi, there were clubs inside the clubs. For instance, Oxbridge alumni socialized by college affiliation and oarsmen crews, long after their undergraduate years and tables were booked for Old Trinity Men at Muthaiga or to celebrate any Old Boys bond from all possible public schools, also revived in Pall Mall clubs memberships.[11]

These dynamics of racial segregation and status distinction, which had been peculiar to Nairobi before the war, were observed in all major cities of the colony. The Eldoret Club testified to this evolution. With the development and mechanization of agriculture after the war, the Rift Valley town on the Uasin Gishu plateau had become a commercial hub between Nairobi and the Western part of the colony, which was then known as Kenya's bread basket. According to the 1948 census, it counted 10 000 inhabitants, among whom were 888 Europeans. An early area of settlement for Afrikaners and British South Africans, the two communities lived apart. Each had its own estates, schools, and the Uasin Gishu Farmers Association had a Dutch and a British Branch. Yet, Afrikaner farmers benefited from war prosperity as much as their British peers, and they were increasingly integrated in political institutions after the war, with representatives at the town council.[12] Thanks to its two South African elements, Eldoret was also seemingly more racist than other towns, and the new wave of migrants in the trade and services was in line with these attitudes.

The social life of the city is well documented in the papers of G.J. Brindley, a local correspondent for Nairobi's *East African Standard* and Nakuru's *Kenya Weekly News*. Reporting social and sporting events was the most important part of his work. More generally, the newspapers reported extensively on the social life of the colony, from sports

11. See for instance, RHO Mss.Afr.s. 1653, C.F. Anderson Reminiscences, p.15. ; RHO Mss.Afr.s. 1676, Vol.II, f.8, D.G. Christie-Miller Papers.

12. C.P. Youé, "Settler Capital and the Assault on the Squatter Peasantry in Kenya's Uasin Gishu District, 1942-63," *African Affairs* 87, no. 348 (1988): 393–418; Groen, "The Afrikaners in Kenya. 1903-1969," 211-212.

competitions to dances. The *East African Standard* regularly published comments on ladies' toilettes and men's suits as they could be observed at country events such as the races and polo tournament, as did the *Sunday Post* with its gossip column, "Miranda's Merrier Moments" and the *Kenya Weekly News* with its"The Distaff Side" headings. Relative to the small size of the European population, national newspapers dedicated much coverage to local events. The various festivities organized on civil and religious occasions such as Christmas or New Year's Eve; gymkhanas or golf tournaments; farewell parties, weddings or birthdays were often reported in the press. As part of a narration of a wider social scene, accounts of club occasions cheerfully mentioned newcomers to a locality, as well as farewells and transfers, especially when they concerned notables, district officers or the local reverend.

The account of Eldoret's social life in the early 1950s sheds light on the dynamics of status differentiation and racial segregation that existed in many of the colony's towns. A little more than a year after the outbreak of the Emergency, the European population celebrated New Year's Eve 1954 in four different places. Dances were held at the Eldoret Club, the Eldoret Sports Club, the Railway Club, and the Pioneer Hotel, each appealing to a different class of whites. G.J. Brindley reported the fancy dress party at the Eldoret Sports Club:

> Why is it that fancy dress seems to make no appeal these days? The Fancy Dress Dance at the Eldoret Sports Club to usher in the New Year was a case in point. There we were – lovely floor, attractive decorations &c. and just a sprinkling of fancy dress costumes, the rest of the guests being in ordinary evening dress. Such a pity as these never can be quite the same spirit of abandon which one experiences when everyone is in costume. Those who had entered into the spirit of the occasion were all extraordinary good. The winning best pair, a Masai herdsman and a member of the Mau Mau were excellently got up and had paid a lot of attention to detail. A faithful reproduction of the old skipper in the advertisement for Skipper Sardines easily walked away with the prize for the best man's costume, but the judging for the ladies prize was far more difficult, this going eventually to "Whitehouse Products", its originality being the deciding factor, though a stately "Night" and a fascinating Elizabethan page were well in the running. At midnight young Wendy Hopper looking very dainty and fairy-like enacted the part of the New Year saying goodbye to a ghostly shrouded 1953 and 1954 came in to the strains of Auld Lang Syne.[13]

Dances and fancy dress parties displayed routinized stereotypes, the Mau Mau fighter and the Maasai herdsmen, of which costumes could only be worn in a self-segregative, European occasion. Eldoret at the time of the Emergency was less subject to terror than other parts of the Highlands. The war centered around Mount Kenya, the Aberdares and Nairobi, with a few incursions up to Nakuru, a hundred miles on the South East.

13. RHO Mss. Afr. s. 950, Brindley Papers, f.345.

Maasai, too, were not common in the region, since their reserves were even further in the East and the South. In the early 1950s, Eldoret's main issue as regards to Africans were squatters, most of them Nandi, which seemed to have caused more debate among settlers than the distant Mau Mau. A mechanized agriculture no longer needed squatters, and the development of dairy farms was threatened by the contamination from diseases that squatters' stock carried. Yet settlers did not want their Nandi to turn political as the Kikuyu had done, so there was much debate on how to evict them peacefully.[14] This united Afrikaners and British settlers in an anti-squatter attitude, and closed the gap between them. Hence Afrikaners gained representation in the District Council and mixed estates appeared.

This had an impact on white sociability, with the formation of associations which were more integrative than clubs. The Uasin Gishu Arts Society, founded after a call by local worthies and under the patronage of the British Council, illustrates this point. It managed to gather more than 150 members, a significant part of the local European population, within a couple of months. It was soon to be qualified the chief cultural organization in the District, and organized the first western Kenya drama festival a few years after its formation. Brindley so describes one of its first meetings:

> Several months ago [...] a public meeting was called at the Eldoret Sports Club, sponsored by many well known people of the town and district of Eldoret and the Uasin Gishu for the purpose of forming an association of the various dramatic musical and other artistic societies into one cohesive whole with the intention of providing more frequent and better entertainment for the residents of the district [...] Since then a number of people have been quietly but busily engaged in furthering this object, and evidence of this was shown on Thursday 30th April at the Eldoret Sports Club when the first of the Society's Guest Nights, or "Green Room Rags" which are to become a regular event on the last Thursday of every month, took place. The General theme of the evening was "Traditional Dances and Songs" and the first part of the programme was provided by the Traditional Dancing Section under the able direction of Mr. James Lochrie; a team of four couples giving demonstrations of both the slow and graceful Strath Spey and the quick gay reel, which were a delight to watch. Then came the stately waltz cotillion in which the general company were afterwards invited to join doing so with obvious enjoyment.
>
> During the interval the company consumed, in very sociable manner, the delicious buffet supper which had been supplied by Members in very lavish quantities.
>
> The latter part of the programme was in the capable and incomparable hands of Mr Jack Griver, who enthralled the audience by playing piano, first classical works, then more popular pieces, and finally accompanying community singing of traditional songs of the five nations represented, viz. English, Afrikaans, Scottish, Irish and Welsh. In response to the vociferous demands from his

14. Youé, "Settler Capital and the Assault on the Squatter Peasantry in Kenya's Uasin Gishu District, 1942-63."

> listeners he closed with two more well known classical compositions. Despite the torrential rains, no less than sixty five persons turned out to support this first "Green Room Rag", and they were indeed well rewarded, enjoying a very happy and successful entertainment.[15]

The Arts Association formed at the Eldoret Sports Club, a less prestigious institution than the nearby Golf Club, provided a middle ground for whites of all origins to socialize under official patronage. An amalgamation of "traditional" British dances and classical piano offered a synthetic European culture for all to mingle, at a distance from the gentility ethos of the most prestigious clubs.

The Eldoret Club, by contrast, was the town's elite institution. It boasted a 18-hole golf course which thrice crossed the Sosiani River. Although played in foursomes, golf as an individual sport left much space for the celebration of personal glories and singular characters. A Captain's golf day celebrated the latter's contributions to the club during his yearly term before being replaced; with much decorum and formalities, the occasion used to praise respective achievements for his community. Brindley's account of the 1953 captain's prize at Eldoret Club illustrates this:

> The Captains Day was celebrated at the Eldoret Club on Sunday in a novel and most enjoyable manner lasting as it did from 8.30 A.M. till 9.30 P.M. In the morning the prizes presented by the Captains, G.F.R. (Dudu) Hopper and Mrs L. Green were played for [follows the scoreboard of the day]. The Captain Prizes were thereafter presented, a minute silence having been observed for Mr. Lisle Shaw, late President of the K.G.U[16]., together with all the replicas for the club major competitions during the year. An excellent day was concluded by a film show of recent social events in the district. Before electing Mr. Parmentier Captain for the ensuing year a hearty vote of thanks was accorded by members of the golf section to G. Hopper for his efforts in the past year during which he has worked increasingly for the welfare of the club and golf. Enthusiasm amongst members of the club for the Royal and Ancient[17] game has grown of late due to the number and variety of competitions organized by the Golf Captain and his efforts together with those of Tom Pretty, in imposing the lay-out of the course. Well done Dudu a magnificent year for which all golfing members of the Eldoret Club are grateful.[18]

Styles of sociability differed from the Sports' Club integrative, cosmopolitan culture and the Golf Club's gentlemanly, bantering kind of celebrations, with formal recognitions and tributes. Through the celebration of individual achievements, clubs reinforced the ideal lifestyle of the right type of settler, a club-man, fond of sports, acting for the community's welfare, deferential to the memory of the colony's great figures. Racial solidarity did not prevent different forms of whiteness from developing, all strictly hierarchized, which a club

15. The Uasin Gishu Arts Society, February 1953, RHO Mss.Afr.s.950 Brindley Papers.
16. The Kenya Golf Union
17. The informal name of St Andrews Golf Club in Scotland, the world's oldest golf course.
18. The text was a draft to be telegraphed. RHO Mss. Afr. s. 950, f.374, Brindley papers.

membership objectivized. Membership in a particular club suggested a respective ethos and set of qualities. While the Eldoret Club epitomized colonial gentility, the Eldoret Sports Club, which mostly emphasized athletics, provided a congenial atmosphere for the whites who did not fit elite and gentility traditions.

II. The Institutionalization of White Solidarity

Rural clubs evolved slightly differently. They were hardly affected by urban newcomers, and the post-war prosperity resulted in low turn-over. As such, they became the social hubs of long-standing farmers. While post-war prosperity boded well for their future, settlers felt increasingly out of touch with the progress of African nationalism and, more widely, the evolution of the Empire. Facing a future that was more and more uncertain and a public opinion in Britain which they knew was against them, Kenya settlers adopted a more stringent, self-protective stance. The biggest offence to a farmers' community was to breach settlers' solidarity, to "let one's side down". This meant the silencing of the petty arrangements and everyday behaviours at the farm that were illegal, and chiefly the violent treatment of African labour. Robin Wainwright, a provincial commissioner in the early 1950s, observed that nobody among the settlers was expected to denounce such behaviour. His opinion was supported by the case of a district officer named Montgomery who was sacked from the Provincial Administration for having beaten an African:

> At the request of a European farmer [Montgomery] had beaten one of the farm labourers for some misdemeanour. Subsequently, the farmer had fallen out with Montgomery and had reported the illegal beating to the authorities. As a result Montgomery was sacked. All the other farmers in the District were so shocked that the farmer could behave so despicably that they banned him from the Machakos Club, and refused even to speak to him for twenty years.[19]

The Montgomery case reveals a particular tension. On the one hand, settlers' relationship to servants and labourers was shaped by a combination of violence and paternalism, and they could hardly stand that officials interfered with "their" employees. On the other hand, settlers refused to blame an official whose practices they found fair, albeit illegal, especially in light of the fact that he had been requested to take this particular act. The Montgomery case showed that for Kenyan farmers the worst offence of all was delation, that is to say the breach of racial connivance as regards to violent practices all found legitimate.

The rupture of racial solidarity could take many forms. Another type was mixed relationships. A settler from Solai Valley, near Nakuru, A.F. Levy so remembered one of his neighbours who was ostracised because he lived with an African woman:

19. RHO Mss. Brit. Emp. 584, The Memoirs of Robert Wainwright, Vol. I, p. 63.

> The valley now looked on the old man with some disfavour. His latest woman was black, and in a white community that was not to be countenanced. Another white woman, yes; somebody's wife, yes; but never a black woman! That was letting down the side! The old chap kept her out of the way whenever we visited him, but his visitors now were few and far between. The Valley had taken umbrage at the breaking of the unwritten rule of abstaining from black women.[20]

One could no longer "turn native". Common twenty years before, this choice was now a factor of exclusion.

Rural clubs were a product of such ethos, which they institutionalized. A reflection of the conflicting relationships with squatters, native labour seems to have been treated more poorly upcountry than in towns. Badly trained and low-paid, most servants lived in boy's quarters in the club's vicinity, without their families, and were provided food. They were paid at the discretion of committees; until the 1950s many doubted that the colony's labour ordinance could apply to clubs. Boys were domestic staff, the subject of paternalistic, personalized relationships as regards to which labour laws were not considered relevant. These relationships were made of infantilization, suspicion, and punishment. Songhor Club's boys each earned around 125 shillings monthly in 1949, a third of the bar's takings for the New Year's Eve dance. Good staff was hard to find, and always suspected of pilfering and spoiling the club, when not fiddling with the bar accounts at their own profit.[21] Some pantry boys were caught stealing some food, and a bar boy was dismissed "for insolent and drunken behavior". Many were discharged for reasons "too obvious" to be explicitly mentioned by committee minutes.[22] Members always complained about the quality of the boys, bar boys especially, who had the delicate task of running such a strategic place for the well-being of the membership. In 1954 alone, the Koru Club changed its bar boy four times.

Clubs took paternalistic measures towards their employees. Those considered the best were appointed to control and master the others, and were to fulfil the most delicate tasks, as such as preparing the tennis courts, so often spoiled in tactless hands. They also helped the committees denounce members who broke the club rules. A boy who was deemed unsatisfactory was called before the committee, and was subjected to a public discussion of his infraction. Losses due to poor billing were counted against his wage, and if by any chance things went better, the wage would be increased.[23] Another had his monthly earnings cancelled following a theft, and was commanded to sleep in the bar to

20. RHO Micr. Afr. s. 576, A.F. Levy Memoirs, "The Snows of Yesteryear", p. 379.

21. See for instance Minutes of a Committee Meeting on December 8th, 1952, KNA MSS 128/41 Koru Club.

22. See for instance Minutes of a Committee Meeting, 12th October 1947, KNA MSS 128/40, Songhor Sports Club; Minutes of a Committee Meeting held at Koru Club, 19/05/1960, KNA MSS 128/41 Koru Club.

23. Minutes of a Committee Meeting held at Koru Club on Wednesday July 9th, 1952, KNA MSS 128/41 Koru Club.

avoid future misadventures. Colony laws strictly forbade the levying of these fines.

Paternalism unequally rewarded Africans. Besides the "boys", a considerable number of Africans worked for clubs without being formally employed, such as the golf caddies. The latter were hired on the spot, out of a list published by the club, and were poorly paid. The relationship between caddies and players are rarely documented, but more attention was given to the African *fundi* – craftsmen – far better paid than the others, who were called by their first name, and carried out all the petty repairs required by the club, from broken chairs to tables and curtains. Most were already employed in settlers' farms, and seem to have been treated more respectfully by the members. Those in Limuru even benefited from a boy's Christmas fund.[24]

The everyday, blatant racism of labour paternalism provided a base on which was built white solidarity. Clubs engineered such consensus through members' participation, in a pattern which existed since the 1920s and was strengthened by the Second World War. War, with a significant part of the male population absent, had accelerated such tendency and given a disciplinary tone to clubs' usual participative culture. Gilgil Country Club Chairman anxiously recalled all the members:

> No club can function successfully unless every member pull his weight and his meticulousness in his dealing with his club. We are a very small community and it is not easy to support a club particularly if some members are apathetic or careless.[25]

Stimulating participation was the committees' main concern. It involved the future of the club, always resting on fragile finances, but also the reputation of its officials. It also gave the measure of the membership's civic engagement with the wider European community. For instance clubs organized suppers for the local church fund, often in conjunction with the local branch of the East African Women's League. For instance, when in 1952 the Koru Club held a fund-raising party to be able to install electricity in its premises, it decided that its extra profits would be donated to the nearby Songhor Church.[26]

Committee minutes made a great deal of members' contributions on projects which often lasted for several months, even years, while most clubs seem to have been in constant construction or refurbishment. They put to the test the solidarity of local settler communities, and gave a measure of everyone's involvement. They showed the strength of one's loyalty to the group. Just after the Second World War, the building of new premises for the Thomson Falls' Country Club emphasized the importance of such bonds, on which the club lay. Years later, a former club secretary, in an account full of rose-coloured nostalgia, recalled that "one would lend a plough, another a barrow, or labourers to help, or cedar off cuts to start the house. Cedar shingles for the roof, bricks for a fireplace,

24. Meeting of the Annual General Meeting, 1947, KRS, Limuru Country Club.
25. Chairman's report 1942, Gilgil Country Club, KNA MSS 128/32, ff.43-4.
26. "Minutes of a Committee Meeting held at Koru Club in Wednesday, July 9th at 6p.m. 1952", KNA MSS 128/40 Koru Club.

eventually an odd piece of furniture and material for curtains, a never ending stream of interest".[27] Calls for members' participation went beyond the building of premises and were not always cheerful. Implicitly, they dismissed as spineless those who did not want to participate, as they accelerated the integration of the few newcomers and their assimilation to an environment and setting which was radically new. One could hardly avoid participation. Club committees repeatedly called on their members to contribute to a subscription for a new squash court, purchase a piano or some lawn mowers, erect a theatre stage or the boys' quarters or a buy of books for the new library.

The requirements of racial solidarity strengthened gentlemanly patronage. The many committee positions that clubs afforded rewarded officers and aristocrats who connected local communities to their own image. In the mid-1940s, on his first months as a member of the Thomson Falls Country Club, Brigadier Cecil Duke asserted the importance of keeping the club a proper gentleman's place, with perfect gardens and lawns. He suggested "to plant trees and flowering shrubs on and around the golf course, and other spaces"; "this was enthusiastically taken on", the committee minutes added, "and members gave seeds cuttings, bushes and trees, which were to be planted and cared for by 'the Brig.', as he was affectionately called".[28] Such initiatives were acknowledged through committees' votes of thanks and tokens of appreciation. Individual rewards and recognitions contrasted with the increasing anonymity of urban life, which lacked distinction and strong social ties. To the contrary, these practices valued the strength of rural communities, their self-worthiness and many collective achievements.

A new pattern of solidarity was the memorialization of settlers' achievements and sacrifices. In 1946, the Songhor Club voted for a building fund to erect a War Memorial, in tribute to its members who had given their lives during the conflict.[29] Fund-raising campaigns increasingly aimed at the erection of a memorial, a statue, a roll of honour, which carried a symbolic load for the settlers' community. In the early 1950s, the Njoro Settlers Association built a Delamere Memorial Hall at the Njoro Country Club, in memory of Kenya's Founding Father. It commemorated Lord Delamere's arrival at Njoro 50 years before, with the money collected by a dedicated trust.[30] Settlers celebrated their heroes, through memorials or the naming of a cup. The late Delamere also had a golf tournament carrying his name, again in Njoro, a few miles from his 48 000-acre Soysambu Ranch.

27. RHO Mss. Afr. s. 1540, History of the Thomson Falls Country Club I, 1938-64.

28. RHO Mss. Afr. s. 1540, History of the Thomson Falls Country Club III, 1938-64.

29. "Minutes of Committee Meeting held on 3rd of June, 1946", KNA MSS 128/40 Songhor Sports Club.

30. Albeit it is unclear from the remaining documents if they only rebuilt an already existing Delamere Hall in 1952, RHO Mss.Afr.s. 1506, Box 1/5, 1931-2 and Box 11/1, 1952-6 Njoro Settlers Association.

III. White Connivance

Despite rural settlers self-segregating tendencies, clubs were the main place where farmers and officials met. This contributed to raising the provincial administrators' sympathy for the settlers' cause. Both categories shared much, in breed and in education. They also had an increasingly common sense of dignity and prestige. For instance, the offices of the provincial administration carried the same honour rolls that were found in clubs, only listing district commissioners instead of local golf aces.[31] This collusion dated to the late 1920s, when an increasing number of retired officials chose to settle in Kenya.[32] For instance, Clarence Buxton (1892-1967), an Old Etonian and a Trinity man, who had served as a Major artilleryman on the battlefields of Europe, had first come to Kenya as a civil servant before becoming a farmer in Limuru and a major post-war political figure. A chair of the Farmers Union, then a Nairobi Councillor and a representative at the European Electors Union, he was also a long standing committee member at the Limuru Country Club.[33]

A reflection of such collusion, clubs were naturally places in which higher officials felt at home. A deputy governor spent his holidays at the Soy Club, on a "purely informal and private visit", in which he intensely practised his golf.[34] During these informal visits, it is likely that some bonds of familiarity were established, having knock-off effects on the official sphere. Clubs were places where officials informed themselves about the mood of a local settler community, in a great variety of semi-informal moments: in 1961, Hugh Fraser, then Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, came to the Molo Club on a Monday morning to meet a delegation of 25 farmers' representatives, from the District Association, the National Farmers Union, European Settlement Trust and various agricultural committees.[35] In larger cities, that kind of meeting was usually held in public halls. As Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Arthur Creech-Jones spent some time in two European clubs "to meet local residents" in the sole Rift Valley portion of his visit.[36] Two years later, his successor, Rees-Williams, over a eight-day visit to Kenya first attended a luncheon at the United Kenya Club in Nairobi; had a tea party at Thomson Fall's Country Club where he expected to meet "as many members as possible"; then had a lunch and a "private dinner party" at the Kitale Club where he slept, to finish with an "informal evening party" at the Nyanza Club.[37] Clubs were therefore a favourite place for

31. RHO Mss. Afr.s.584, The Memoirs of Robin Wainwright, p.355

32. Berman, *Control & Crisis in Colonial Kenya. The Dialectic of Domination*, 137-138.

33. Kenya Registry of Society, Limuru Country Club, RHO MSS Brit. Emp. 390, Papers of C.E.V. Buxton.

34. DC UG to Manager Soy Club, 20/03/1956, DC UG 1/3/5.

35. The Lord Wedgwood, Chairman Molo, Mau Summit and Turi District Association to DC Nakuru, 11/05/1961, KNA DC NKU 3/4/5.

36. Visit of Mr Creech-Jones, DC Kitale to PC Rift, 5/07/1946, KNA DC NKU 3/4/5.

37. Programme for Visit of Mr Rees-Williams, Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies and Party, April 1948, KNA DC NKU 3/4/5, "Mr. Rees-Williams's Tour", *The Times*, April 6, 1948.

official lunches, which gathered the visiting delegation, local administrators and settlers' representatives.[38]

These arrangements implicitly reinforced Asians and Africans as groups with radically different customs. It would have been extremely incongruous for an European higher official of any sort to take tea or to have dinner at an Asian club or an African social hall, even if they sometimes visited them. Even when M. Rees-Williams came to the multiracial United Kenya Club, it was for the weekly luncheon, a formalized moment of sociability organized around a speech he delivered. These occasions produced and legitimated certain forms of private association on a racial basis. Higher officials did not schedule moments of informality, free of any strict agenda, with randomly met Africans and Asians as they did with Europeans, not to mention the sleeping at the home of a farmers' leader, which seems to have been common practice.[39] A meeting between Under Secretary of State Fraser and the executive committee of the powerful Kenya National Farmers' Union could be considered as "entertainment" because it took place on the Rift Valley Sports' Club upstairs verandah, the host expecting that "none of Mr Fraser's party w[ould] be Africans".[40] The latter were relegated out of the sphere of tongue-in-cheek and laid-back conversations, even those who were recognized as community leaders.[41]

Provincial administrators who patronized local settlers' clubs were subjected to their pressure and influence, much more than what was the case with Africans or Asians. This reinforced the settlers' grip over the colony's affairs. They felt the right to question officials as if they were directly accountable to them, in an informal space where they were in the minority. Terence Gavaghan, then a DC, so describes the occasions in which settlers and officials could call out each other in a spirit of connivance:

> A well attended meeting in the Club, to which I was invited, debated the perennial subject of stock theft over the border by Samburu Moran and I was, as expected, given a rough time for not putting a stop to it. There was no great comfort in being told by Andrew Dykes, in his whinnying, lowland Scots accent, "Ye know, Gavaghan, we're' no' *entirely* dissatisfied wi' ye", to which I could only reply that I wished I could reciprocate.[42]

38. Some examples can be found, among many, in Visit of Mr. Davies of the Colonial Office, Secretariat GH to PC Rift, 19/10/1946, KNA DC NKU 3/4/5; List of Guests Invited to Luncheon at the Rift Valley Sports Club, Nakuru, on Wednesday 15th November 1950, To Meet Mr. Gorell Barnes, Assistant Under-Secretary, Colonial Office, KNA DC NKU 3/4/5.

39. Albeit from the late 1940s, it happened with poorer Whites, notably Afrikaners of the Uasin Gishu Plateau. See for instance, Governor's Visit, 10-12 March 1955, PC Rift to DC UG, 17/02/1955, KNA DC UG 1/3/5.

40. Alec Ward, Executive Officer, Kenya National Farmers Union to PC Rift, 3/05/1961, KNA DC NKU 3/4/5.

41. For instance, at the occasion of the 1956 Parliamentary Delegation visit to Kenya, the program mentioned that "any farmers interested in meeting the members of the delegation would meet them informally over drinks before lunch and at lunch at the Club. Discussions would be strictly informal and there would be no formality whatsoever about the occasion". Visit of Parliamentary Delegation, DC Laikipia to PC Rift, 10/11/1956, KNA PC NKU 3/4/10.

42. Gavaghan, *Of Lions and Dung Beetles. A "Man in the Middle" of Colonial Administration in*

Officials could organize informal sessions during which they tried to justify the policies they applied in front of a settlers' attendance, who asked questions and put them to the test.[43] It is not surprising then that the administration got "captured" by settlers, being increasingly unable to act locally without their consent.[44]

The settlers were alone in having the possibility to chat about their appreciation of the colony's politics while at the bar. By contrast, Africans were summoned at their working place or at the DC's office, and were expected to express views which were restricted to their own professional field or their community's welfare. Race had primacy over all other types of hierarchies, mostly because it was produced as a class. The manners that were considered the most respectable, and thus the most suitable for political discussions, were Europeans' cultural attributes. A visit of the East African Royal Commission illustrates this point. The Commission was to investigate the possibilities of economic promotion for the three East African territories.[45] In March 1953, its members stayed at Uasin Gishu, and accommodation had been arranged for two nights at the Soy Club, for everybody but Chief Kidaha, a young Oxford-educated African from Tanzania. The local DC had arranged him to be housed privately, to make "matters slightly easier for him". The DC consulted the club authorities, who gave a backhanded answer: "The Royal Commission having booked in MUST BE TREATED as a Royal Commission IRRESPECTIVE OF THEIR COMPOSITION". "ERGO", the club secretary added, "it is felt that the entire accommodation should be booked so that there will be no one else staying there at all during their nights stay".[46] Adding that the membership of the club, though not rigid, was bound to stick to its conventions, he required that all members of the commission should be introduced by two regular members of the club, in order to register as Temporary Honorary Members. He then suggested that the club members residing in Nairobi, like Cavendish-Bentick, the then member for agriculture, a conservative man according to Kenya standards, would have easily provided the commission with the necessary introduction.

These measures were taken to avoid a conflict with the Hotel Keepers Association, which was then entirely responsible for the implementation of a strict colour bar in hotels, as all European clubs did. The officials in charge of the visit neither opposed nor discussed. They had little choice but to comply, or to find private accommodation for all members of the Commission, obviously an inconvenient task. It seems from the official letters that

Kenya, 197.

43. Gavaghan, *Of Lions and Dung Beetles. A "Man in the Middle" of Colonial Administration in Kenya*, 253.

44. For an analysis of how these dynamics played at the colony level during S.P. Mitchell's mandate see: Throup, *Economic & Social Origins of Mau Mau*, 37.

45. For a political analysis of the 1953-1955 East African Royal Commission, see Andrew James Hood, "Developing the East African: The East Africa Royal Commission, 1953-1955, and its critics" (PhD diss., Rice University, 1997).

46. in Capital letters as in the original document, East African Royal Commission, to DC UG, 24/02/1953, KNA DC UG 1/3/5.

discrimination of this sort was peculiar to Kenya and rarely found in other East African countries. The officials in charge of arranging the commission's journey were obliged to accept the club's conditions, making themselves liable to its membership and to their proposer, the most prominent settlers' representative in the colony. The latter accepted them as members, which meant as equals, with all the ambiguities of the formulae. Such informal patronage might have brought some indirect bias and self-censorship from the Commission's work, as it made any direct opposition and political disagreement over the local settler's interests a matter of discourtesy.

IV. Imperial Visits

As institutions, clubs were intertwined with the official life of the colony. They were used and recognized on many public and civic occasions. The most striking of these events were the official visits. Clubs were used to organize functions or merely provide housing to the delegations. They were also used during the many travels of the governor and his representatives throughout the colony. The itinerant and seasonal supreme courts, when a magistrate toured several locations, were housed in the clubs where they held sessions. Less often, the visits of the (Under-)Secretary of State for the Colonies, of one or several MPs, of a Royal Commission, all made use of Kenya's extensive clubland.

The epitome of such events were the Royal Family visits. Several princes and princesses came to Kenya, and once the Queen Mother. In 1956, Princess Margaret travelled to Kenya on a five-week tour of East Africa. She also passed through Zanzibar, Mauritius and Tanganyika. Life Magazine said the Princess was "on mission": Kenya was hurt by Mau Mau since 1952.[47] The "troubled continent" needed care, and it seemed the Royal suit provided for "the Queen's subjects of all races an opportunity to show their loyalty to the Crown and their affection for her sister".[48] It was believed that "the visit [could] do much to strengthen the bonds which link[ed] all members of a multi-racial society, despite political wrangles, in their allegiance to the Throne, which [was] the symbol of unity".The government was "anxious to show her the progress that [had] been made despite the ravages of the rebellion".[49] The press was sure her visit would trigger a collective thrill.

Long before she landed, officials paid meticulous attention to the pettiest of details. The Queen's sister and her suit were to visit Nairobi, Mombasa and Nakuru in the Rift Valley, all in four days, ending in a grand safari in the newly opened Amboseli National Park. There were "ceremonial drives" to accompany them, and functions were held everywhere they stopped. Princess Margaret honoured the Royal Agricultural Society Show with her presence, as she did with several settler communities, on the most recent set-

47. "Magnetic Margaret's African Mission", LIFE *Magazine*, 12/11/1956, pp.60-66.
48. "Royal Visit", *East African Standard*, 2/04/1956, press cut in KNA CS 8/15/67.
49. *Ibid.*

tlements of the Kinangop Plateau, and Mau Narok in the Rift Valley. On her way back from Amboseli, she was scheduled to stop for a grand ceremonial in Machakos, a district capital 35 miles East of Nairobi.

Machakos marked the zenith of the Princess's visit. It was the main town in Ukambani, a region which had since the early days of the British presence in East Africa supplied *askaris* to the Kenya African Rifles and the Kenya Police in a far higher proportion than the other tribes.[50] Many were in the regiments which were then fighting the Mau Mau in the Forests of Mount Kenya. The *baraza*[51] rewarded their loyalty and courage.

The local DC proposed to organize the event around the Machakos Sports Club grounds, a purely European institution, unofficial home of the local Ulu Settlers Association. The reasons for this choice remains unclear, but convenience was certainly a consideration. Anxious not to offend the local Asian community, the committee members in charge of the festivities sought to ask if the Indian Club ground could be used for "ngomas"[52] and additional fairground space. The Ismaili community also proposed to help, offering through its secretary Mr Jan Mohammed the grounds of its club, the Aga Khan Club.[53] Space was needed as a fair was organized. The evening would be crowned by fireworks and bonfires. The European club remained at the centre. Only the outside part of its premises would be in use, with its the cricket pitch – then a sport played by both European and Asian teams, in each other's grounds. The cricket screens had to be removed, the fences altered for H.R.H. to enter the ground, the latter to be roped off again. One enclosure replaced another, and some daises, of which exact measurements were given, were built for all invited guests, carefully gathered by race. A Royal Lunch was scheduled, just before the highlight of the day: a pageant was organized, in which featured the Kenya African Rifles, the Kenya Police, the Tribal Police, the Home Guard, game scouts and prison warders, and ex-servicemen followed by the missions and pupils from the local Girls High School, that the Princess had visited earlier. The K.A.R. band would play military songs, and the crowd was expected to join for the final one, *Funga Safari*, the famous anthem of the regiment, for which the words would be distributed.[54]

50. On the myth of Akamba as a martial race, and their subsequent use by the British in most army and paramilitary corps in the colony see: Timothy Parsons, ""Wakamba Warriors Are Soldiers of the Queen": The Evolution of the Kamba as a Martial Race, 1890-1970," *Ethnohistory* 46, no. 4 (1999): 671–701.

51. Swahili word for council, usually used to mean public meeting.

52. In Kiswahili, the word designates the traditional dances.

53. Minutes of the second meeting of sub-committee n°8 for afternoon and evening festivities on the occasion of H.R.H. Princess Margaret's Visit on 22.10.56., KNA/PC NGONG/1/11/13 Royal Visit.

54. David Killingray, *Fighting for Britain: African Soldiers in the Second World War* (James Currey, 2010), 160.

Funga Safari	*Let's move off*
Funga Safari	*Let's move off!*
Habari ya nani ?	*By whose orders?*
Habari ya nani?	*By whose orders?*
Habari ya Bwana Kapteni	*The orders of mister Captain*
Habari ya Bwana Kapteni	*The orders of mister Captain*
Habari ya kay-ay-ar	*The orders of the K.A.R.*

The press would attend the ceremony on the flat roof over the club's library, thanks to a wooded staircase built for the occasion.[55] These organizational details may appear trivial, but they remind us of the preparation for such an event, and how expressions of jubilation were framed and scheduled. There was no room for the unforeseen to happen. Even if the Princess finally had to skip one civic luncheon in Nairobi because of a gastric upset, and the poor quality of the sound system in Machakos resulted in the person in charge being severely censured, all went as scheduled during her Kenya visit, and sometimes even beyond.[56] The Princess was still in Kenya when the Mau Mau leader Dedan Kimathi got captured.

A few years later, as the winds were definitely turning over the fate of East Africa, the Queen Mother visited Kenya. The formal aspects were made even more rigid. Any interaction with the Queen, who among other tributes visited both the Endebess Club and the Mombasa Yacht Club, had to respond to a strict protocol that was absent from her daughter's tributes. Gifts to Her Majesty were particularly restricted; she only accepted "on the rarest occasions" presents from firms or private individuals. She allowed a few exceptions though: non-perishable food, flowers, preferably presented by a child or "very small gifts of purely sentimental value offered by children or veterans", as "a refusal would lead to hurt feelings", books "of a non-controversial nature" if offered by an author "of reputable character", pictures if given by the artist. This gave little margin for the material expression of loyalty.[57]

Royal Visits were moments of recognition, a way to distinguish the communities which collectively mattered for the Empire. It seems to have been an ordeal for those who were dismissed and excluded. It put to test the moral economy of the Empire, as those who had given or sacrificed for its sake, especially in times of war, expected recognition.

Africans complained that they played only a marginal part in the imperial mechanics of honours and recognitions. When Arthur Creech-Jones, then Under Secretary for the Colonies, visited Kenya in 1946 to reward those involved in the war effort, J.F.G. Kanya,

55. The *British Pathe* website provides a series of fascinating videos related to Princess Margaret's visit to Kenya, including the Machakos pageant:`www.britishpathe.com/video/princess-margaret-in-machako-and-nairobi-kenya`

56. LIFE magazine, 12/11/1956 and DC Machakos to Director of Information, 24/10/1956, KNA PC NGONG 1/11/13.

57. Some notes on the details of Royal tours made by Her Majesty Queen Elisabeth the Queen Mother, KNA DC UG 1/3/5.

an African from Nakuru, wrote with anger to the *East African Standard*'s Editor:

> I am afraid that [Creech-Jones] will only see what he is wanted to see [...] I say this because I know exactly what happens when visits of great importance as the one in question are paid. (I would like to recall in this connexion the visit paid to East Africa recently by Major Orde Brown. He is said to have visited Nakuru and reported very favourably on African housing. Alas ! I wonder whether he visited the Native Location and witnessed the terrible conditions under which we live!). Amongst the places that I would like Mr. Creech Jones to see in Nakuru are the Native Civil Hospital, the Location (not only the Social Hall,) and the school for African children. I need not say, of course, that we would like to meet him when he comes.[58]

Another African, Mr Othetch from Nairobi, "most humbly beg[ged] the Kenya Government that [...] arrangements should be such that Mr. Creech Jones be given as much time as possible to investigate and get the Africans' needs and views thoroughly [and] to see for himself the fact that the European settlers have secured privilege and as a result have caused great destruction to the Native population of this Colony".[59]

The letters, "typical example of many received by the *East African Standard* reflecting on the African lack of appreciation and understanding of what British settlement has achieved for Kenya and its backward native people.", wrote the Editor, articulating a perception of the visit that differed from the laudatory accounts of loyalty common in the press and official reports. It suggests that many Africans understood their belonging to the Empire as a relationship through which to report issues and negotiate some rights, and this was much more important in supporting colonial legitimacy than the spectacular display of monarchic prestige. It was perhaps no accident that Mr Othetch mentioned the fact that Creech-Jones had "spoken on courageously in various Parliamentary debates" on African Affairs. His visit was expected to offer Africans the protection of the Metropolis, when clarifying the contradiction between British conception of civil rights and modernizing mission; and the crude realities of settlers' colonialism.[60]

Things had not really changed with multi-racialism and its promises for "partnership". As a doctrine of separate political representation, it recognized racial communities rather than class, professions or individuals. Among each race, leaders were identified and could sit on the same table. It is interesting to see, in everyday administrative practices, what kind of men the authorities recognized as suitable, legitimate leaders. Invitations for the 1956 Garden Party at the Government House said it all : it aimed to gather leaders of all communities, carefully selected from all provinces by the local District Commissioners. It welcomed 1200 Europeans for a hundred Asians and Africans, the later having to be

58. Mr. Creech Jone's Visit, *East African Standard*, 13/07/46, press cutting in KNA DC NKU 3/4/5.
59. Ibid.
60. This further confirmed by a letter of grievances given by the local Chief Elijah to Creech-Jones on his visit to Nandi Hills, Memorandum Presented To The Right Honourable The Under Secretary of State for The Colonies, presented by Chief Elijah at Kaptumo on 9/04/1948, KNA DC KNU 3/4/5.

"escorted" by their respective DCs, who also took charge of their transportation.[61] A few months later, Princess Margaret's high table lunch on the Machakos Club's grounds was only a little more generous in its invitations to Africans. Thirty of them, seven chiefs included, were invited. They were all Kamba, having the DC's office for postal address. They were awarded the honour of having their meal amongst 30 settlers, 30 European officials, 4 journalists, 4 army officers, 4 missionaries, and finally, 4 Asians and an Arab. Two of these Africans, senior chiefs, were placed on the Princess table, but only the representatives of the four most prominent settlers' families were in direct proximity to her.[62] The distribution reflected the power balance in officials' mind, in times of unequal partnership. It marked that the three races in the colony – the Arabs were hardly ever mentioned – were unequal in dignity and representation.

V. The Waning Of Official Patronage

In the racialized economy of recognitions and honours, European clubs constantly sought to obtain official patronage. A key element in the production of a club's prestige, it determined its rank among a set of local associations and clubs. Committees regularly wrote to the governor in order to propose him honorary membership or chairmanship, or, more often, to be their patron. This figure was inundated with such requests, and was obliged to accept a handful of them.[63] His choices seem to have been guided by a combination of which communities he found desirable to be officially acknowledged, and his personal tastes, leisure and acquaintances. Criteria mixed the official and the informal. In 1960, Sir Patrick Renison politely refused an honorary membership at the newly-built luxury Mount Kenya Safari Club in Nanyuki, a tourism lodge build by an American billionaire, which in fact was more an hotel than a club, with its underwater observation cocktail lounge and Turkish bath. He argued that he was "so heavily booked that [he] would only be able to avail [himself] of [the] Club's amenities on very rare occasions", yet he accepted for him and his wife a similar honour from the Kenya and Uganda Railway Golf Club, a rather Spartan institution made for the enjoyment of East African Railways and Harbours employees, which suggests that he found important to recognize public companies.[64] He similarly agreed to be an Honorary member of the Private Stands of the Jockey Club of Kenya, and was delighted to become the same at the Acquasports Club, the Saturday Club – a luncheon club – and the Lion's Club without being able to be present at any meeting, and despite admitting being "a bit confused" about all service

61. Garden Party Government House Nairobi, October 20th, PC Rift Valley to DCs Rift Valley, 6/08/1956, KNA DC UG 1/3/5.

62. Royal Lunch Machakos, DC Machakos to PC Ngong, 7/10/1956, KNA PC Ngong 1/11/13.

63. KNA GH 7/88 Institutions of Which Your Excellency is Patron or President.

64. W. Holden, President of Mount Kenya Safari Club to H.E. The Governor, 17/12/1959 and reply, 5/01/1960; President, Kenya and Uganda Railways Golf Club to The Aide-de-Camp, Government House, 10/02/1960, KNA GH 7/85, Clubs, Miscellaneous.

clubs. He was also a member of the Royal Nairobi Golf Club and the Nairobi Club, still an officials' stronghold, where he was invited to deliver a few words at the chairman's "stag party" and the Kiambu Club, which he "honoured" several times by his "informal" presence, and presided over the annual officers versus settlers golf match. It is notable that the three former clubs were explicitly reserved for individuals of pure European descent.[65] He however refused to be the patron of the Impala Club, formerly the Old Cambrian, built to gather the European alumni of Kenya schools, and more specifically the Prince of Wales School, as he received "innumerable requests" and wanted to "limit his acceptance to those Organizations which are generally representative of the Colony as a whole rather than favouring individual Clubs".[66] He similarly turned down a membership proposal to the Cathay Club, having "never been further East than Ceylan"; and to the Jambo Club for Edinburgh University alumni, having another *alma mater*; but being a player, he agreed to be Patron of the Kenya Bowling Association. Renison as a governor held several memberships and patronage of the honorary sort, but it seems that in times of better optimism towards the colonial project, previous governors had given their assent to an even wider number of European clubs. Besides official patronage, the governor's presence was required on all important occasions, and his comments were requested in souvenir magazines and programmes. It meant, also, that the clubs were eager to get such patronage, as it was undoubtedly beneficial to their funding and attendance. More importantly, it brought prestige to the clubs and respectability to their members, all desirable attributes hinging on the governor's arbitrary will.

A supreme honour, beyond the governor's patronage or membership, was the obtaining of Royal honours. The addition of the Royal prefix to the name of a club or association was a rare and much sought-after distinction, of which among clubs the Royal Nairobi Golf Club had been the first honoured, in 1935.[67] Requesting a Royal mark took different forms. In 1953, a few months after Elizabeth visited Kenya, a visit during which she had become a queen, the Nyeri Club committee requested permission to call one of its annual golf competitions the Queen Elisabeth II Trophy. The committee argued that the club enjoyed a close association with the Royal family: the Queen had visited the Nyeri Club as a Princess the previous year, and the Sagana Royal lodge, where she had stayed, was within the same district. The matter was taken seriously by the authorities. An application was made to Her Majesty's secretary thought the Colonial Office by the governor, who supported the case. It was rejected; using the Queen's name, they were told, answered to rigorous rules and it could not be given to a cup unless the Queen paid for and presented it herself. The Queen Elisabeth Coronation Trophy was suggested instead, as a

65. KNA GH 7/85 Clubs-Miscellaneous.

66. Private Secretray, Governor's House to Chairman Kampala Club, 4/05/1960, KNA GH 7/85.

67. PRO CO 533/459/4 Nairobi Golf Club: Granted Prefix "Royal"; PRO CO 323/1333/8, Use of the Royal Arms and Badge by the Royal Nairobi Golf Club and *Royal Nairobi Golf Club Centenary Brochure*, 1906-2006, Nairobi, 2006.

commemoration, which carried less prestige, as it did not require Her Majesty's blessing. The club had no choice but to agree.[68]

In its ambition to celebrate the Queen's Coronation just after Her visit to Kenya, Nyeri Club was not alone. The same year, the Njoro Club, again arguing from its close connections with the Royal Family, wrote to Buckingham Palace to obtain signed photographs of Her Majesty and H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh. The club already owned an impressive collection of such pictures, including King George VI and Queen Elisabeth; the Queen Mother who had previously visited the club with her husband as Duchess of York, the Duke of Windsor who as Prince of Wales had played golf at Njoro, thanks to his friendship with the then president, Lord Francis Scott; and the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester, who also seemed to have made a point of visiting this little establishment in the Rift Valley. All were prestigious visitors, whose names nowadays give an idea of the aristocratic nature of the local settlers' leaders. This also illustrates the latter's typical aristocratic arrogance, while they did not find useful to ask the governor's recommendation, as they were coldly reminded by Buckingham Palace. The whole affair caused the highest officials to write letters. The request was a failure, since the Queen was sparing of her blessings, and only presented signed photographs to clubs she actually visited. The Queen's private secretary added somewhat mischievously that there was indeed no objection for the club to buy unsigned ones.[69] This shows the increasing difficulty, after the beginning of the Mau Mau War, for clubs and other institutions iconic of settlers' radicalism, to get honoured by the monarchy and, to a lesser extent, the governor, who rather preferred to value attempts to establish a stable, multi-racial society.

The Mau Mau War furthered settlers' closure and self-segregating attitude. The second prong of counter-insurgency was based on the idea that African advancement was the best way to protect British interests in a future multi-racial government. This required, in a not-too-distant future, opening the White Highlands to African ownership. This was a concession settlers were not ready to grant. Their uncompromising opposition was epitomized in 1956 with the St Julian's community affair, when a set of European liberals decided to open a retreat for Christians of all races in Limuru, 20 miles North West of Nairobi, at the border of the White Highlands. The project was supported by the Anglican Church of Kenya, with Sir Evelyn Baring's approval. The Limuru District Association, along with seventeen other district associations, petitioned the Chief Secretary in protest. The European Elected Members at the LegCo soon followed: St Julian, with Africans in residence, would have breached the racial sanctity of the Highlands, yet of whose development owed much to native servants and labourers. The settler-controlled Highland Board, which supervised all land transactions in the region, refused to approve the selling of a plot to St Julian's. For the first time, the governor frontally opposed such decision,

68. KNA GH 7/66 Nyeri Club.
69. KNA GH 7/68, Njoro Country Club.

until the House of Commons in Britain raised the issue. The fear of British public reproof, which would have led to a questioning of the whole status of the Highlands, eventually pushed settlers to find a compromise and to allow St Julian's to settle in 1957; two years later, the Highlands were opened to all races for cultivation.[70]

Settlers' confidence in the Empire waned, as did their reliance in administrators. They became patently defiant to official authority, which they accused of selling out the cause of settlement. European clubs were permeated by this self-segregating, uncompromising attitude. While African pressures over the White Highlands catalysed farmers' anxieties, many adopted an attitude of ruthlessness and brutality as an expression of their inflexible political opinion, especially in front of officials and by contrast with the urban, more liberal population. Settler behaviour in the Tigoni Club, the closest location to St Julian's, was indicative:

> Possibly arising from a residual sense of insecurity of tenure, a "pride" of settlers had sprung up, fiercely resistant to any local African land pressures. They were dubbed the "Tigoni Tigers". The male were very male and the females, young or old, deadlier [...].[71]

In a similar fashion, the Laikipia and Maralal ranchers expressed their deep-rooted presence in the colony by valuing an outrageous masculinity, along with a series of weird customs. As Terence Gavaghan, a senior administrative officer recalls of his visit to Laikipia:

> The club was the social heart of the community and the meeting place of the Laikipia Ranchers' Association, whose documented customs were both arcane and strict, to the extent that only tinned milk was to be used for their tea, lest fresh milk be diverted from the nourishment of calves. […] Beside the bar entrance there was a tall window frame set with five vertical iron bars which proof of *machismo* required should be seized and bent apart.[72]

During the last years of the British rule, radicalism left space for discouragement and distrust. It seems the Provincial Administration then worried to the point of writing intelligence reports on clubs' social life to better understand what had gone wrong with the settlers. When in February 1958 a delegation of British Parliamentary delegates – a Conservative and a Labour – came to Njoro Country Club for "an informal gathering around the bar", a police officer in plain-clothes was there and on the look-out, ready to report. He later wrote to the Special Branch:

> The delegates were duly introduced around the various persons in the club, they then split up and attached themselves to various groups of settlers for

70. Frost, *Race Against Time. Human Relations and Politics in Kenya before Independence*, 231-248.
71. Gavaghan, *Of Lions and Dung Beetles. A "Man in the Middle" of Colonial Administration in Kenya*, 258.
72. Ibid., 195.

> about ten minutes at a time. As far as I can tell they expressed no desire to talk to any Africans. In turn, the District Officer […] and myself were introduced to the delegates. The Labour MP just shook hands with us and moved on, the Conservative M.P. however stayed with us for about ten minutes during which time he asked the DO what was the position as regards to the administration in general in the European settled areas as he had heard a rumour that they were going to be moved out and only looked after the reserve areas. The DO replied that as far as he knew there was no truth in this rumour. The Conservative MP then went to ask the DO about the rise of Mau Mau and stated that he had heard that some Government Departments heard before the outbreak that it was likely to happen and nothing was done about it. […] As they were leaving the Club the Conservative M.P. came up to me and quickly said he was getting a little bit fed up with the settlers as all they kept asking him was how long he thought they would be able to live comfortably in the Colony and he kept on telling them that their future at the moment was as secure as it had ever had been and it was the job of people like myself and the District Officer to confirm this and try to put the settlers minds at rest. He went on to say that the whole future of the Colony rested on our (Government Officials) shoulders.
>
> After the delegates had left, the Club emptied. The closing remarks from some of the settlers appeared to be to the effect that there goes another Parliamentary Delegation who, after staying a few days in the Colony, think that they are in a position to talk with authority on the life and ways of the colony.[73]

The settlers had good reasons to be sceptical, as the last parliamentary delegation that had come to Kenya, in 1954, not only investigated Mau Mau violence, but also reported abuses of force by the police. A year later, the Hola massacre was discussed at the House of Commons, where MPs unanimously denounced the unacceptability of the conditions of detention in the Mau Mau camps. More generally, the war had been extremely costly, and it had become obvious that a handful of white settlers were not worth the sacrifice entailed. The Empire was waning, and in Africa, Sudan and Ghana were already independent. Appointed in 1959, the McMillan Government admitted that decolonization was irremediable. The first Lancaster House conference was convened a few months later, to negotiate the constitutional framework through which Kenya would be ruled by an independent government.

VI. Late Colonial Panics and Aborted Futures

While constitutional evolution seemed inevitable, there was still much debate as regards to the place whites would have in an independent Kenya. From the early 1950s, a set of Europeans, under the umbrella of the Capricorn organization, started to promote in

73. Visit of Parliamentary Delegates to Njoro Country Club, 5th February 1958, Officer in charge, Njoro Police Station to Special Branch, Nakuru, 8/02/1958, KNA DC NKU 7/2.

Kenya alternative models of citizenship in which club membership, as proof of civility and education, featured as civic attribute.

Capricorn was founded in Salisbury (Southern Rhodesia) in July 1947, by Colonel David Stirling, who had been one of the Special Air Service initiators during the war. The movement was first launched as a pressure group, advocating for the strengthening of the European position in Africa, the lowering of Asian immigration, and independence from the Colonial Office.[74] It championed the federation of British East and Central Africa territories at the north of the Capricorn –the Rhodesias, Nyasaland, Tanganyika and Kenya–, hence its name. The Rhodesias would have united their resources and Nyasaland would have been a manpower reserve for the mines and a nascent industrialization. In the face of post-war racial problems, and against the South African model, Capricorn proposed to renew the principle of imperial trusteeship, making white settlers the custodians of African progress, and advocating a separate development for both races. Capricorn became increasingly public. Once a discrete pressure group, lobbying in the Colonial Office corridors, it increasingly sought to gain popular consent.

On December 8, 1952, the "Salisbury Declarations" were released and published in the press, making clearer the objects of the Capricorn Movement, which hitherto had remained rather confused. Written by European settlers –most of them Southern Rhodesians, having migrated after the war and personalities as such as Laurens Van Der Post– it reasserted the need for "native", European and "open" areas, the Whites "protecting" the natives until their cultural an material standards had reached those of the Europeans. Theses areas were to be ruled under the "two pyramids" system, of two independent racial hierarchies, the native one being ultimately supervised by Europeans. It encouraged European migration, neglected the Asians, prompted for more economic cooperation within the Capricorn territories. In the latter, a regime of qualified citizenship was to define one's right to vote. The Declarations proposed that there would be "full" and "non-full" citizens, the latter only being entitled to civic rights and land ownership in the native areas; the "open areas" were to remain the realm of the full, civilized and accomplished citizen. Regarding who was to be granted such status, the document was very vague.[75]

74. Several papers have been written on Capricorn, for a case study on Zambia see: Bizeck Jube Phiri, "The Capricorn Africa Society Revisited: The Impact of Liberalism in Zambia's Colonial History, 1949-1963," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 24, no. 1 (1991): 65–83; on Tanganyika see: Allistair Ross, "The Capricorn Africa Society and European Reactions to African Nationalism in Tanganyika, 1949–60," *African Affairs* 76, no. 305 (1977): 519–535; on Kenya see Tabitha Kanogo, "Politics of Collaboration or Domination ? Case Study of the Capricorn African Society," *Kenya Historical Review* 2, no. 2 (1974): 127–142; on Southern Rhodesia, the most complete account of the Society's activities can be found in Section 1 of : H.B.K. Sondashi, "The politics of the voice. An examination and comparison of British pressure groups (Capricorn Africa Society, the Africa Bureau and the Movement for Colonial Freedom), which sought to influence colonial policies and events" (PhD diss., University of York, 1980), 1-115; An insider's account has been written by Richard Hughes, an architect, chairman of the Kenya branch: Richard Hughes, *Capricorn: David Stirling's African Campaign* (London: The Radcliffe Press, 2003).

75. Sondashi, "The politics of the voice. An examination and comparison of British pressure groups

Eventually, the Movement sought to recruit educated Africans as agents whose role was to promote the Capricorn principles in the reserves. Its European initiators were convinced that their compromise position would deflect both white supremacists and African nationalists, both termed pejoratively as "racialists" in the Movement's documents.

In 1952-1953, Capricorn seems to have gained an audience among Central Africa white politicians, as it actively took part in the campaign for the Federation of Rhodesias and Nyasaland. From August 1953, though, when the Federation was declared, Capricorn lost its influence, as it was no longer needed by white settlers and their leaders. Stirling then decided on a change of policy: from February 1954, the Movement became a society and its membership was opened to the public and to all races, with branches in all Capricorn countries.[76]A London office was opened at Cheval Place. It published a manifesto in the press, with the aim of recruiting 100 000 members.[77] For the first time, it evoked a "Capricorn Africa", where all races would have had the right to citizenship. Hence its new emblem, a zebra, an animal which "has black, brown and white stripes but it is one living organism. If it is pierced to the hurt it dies, and it does not matter through which stripe the wound has been made".[78] Capricorners believed that "All men despite their varying talents are born equal in dignity before God and have a common duty to one another", hence the necessity to work "for the creation of a common citizenship in each of these territories in which members of all races would take a full part, in which only civilized and cultural values would be protected, and in which racial discrimination would be outlawed". The Constitution of the new Capricorn Africa Society reassessed European responsibility toward African development, maintaining "Western Christian civilisation and cultural standards, while helping all members of all races to attain these standards". Therefore, it called for "a new conception of African patriotism", and to "devise a system of common citizenship and a workable procedure for its attainment by the individual."[79] The bulk of the Capricorn program was inspired by Joseph Houldsworth Oldham, an influential missionary, long involved in colonial affairs and one of Stirling's closest advisors.[80]

To fulfil its objectives, the society sought to organize a Capricorn Convention, where representatives from all races of all countries involved would sign an agreement on a common citizenship. Its principles were basic, "the coloured consents to the protection of

(Capricorn Africa Society, the Africa Bureau and the Movement for Colonial Freedom), which sought to influence colonial policies and events," 8-15.

76. Kanogo, "Politics of Collaboration or Domination ? Case Study of the Capricorn African Society," 130.

77. The Capricorn Movement. Its Aims, Objects and Programme, 1954, RHO Mss Brit. Emp. 390, Box 2 f.3, Clarence Buxton Papers.

78. The Capricorn Africa Trust, RHO Mss Afr. s.570 Greaves.

79. The Capricorn Movement. Its Aims, Objects and Programme, 1954, RHO Mss Brit. Emp. 390, Box 2 f.3, Clarence Buxton Papers.

80. J. Oldham had been for more than twenty years the secretary of the International Missionary Council, and a member of the Advisory Committee on Education in the Colonies. He was an intimate of Lord Lugard, with whom they advised the Colonial Office, Hughes, *Capricorn: David Stirling's African Campaign*, 84-85.

civilized and cultural standards while the European consents to the removal of the colour bar and all types of racial discrimination"; from there, "a code of human relations" –the Citizenship Document– was to be drafted, defining "the qualifications for citizenship and the franchise", "the rights and responsibilities of the citizen and the non-citizen", "the citizenship's loyalty code and its oath of allegiance", and "the machinery of citizenship and the electoral system".[81] All this was the role of the thirty-five Citizenship Committees, established in Capricorn branches, which were in charge of defining such desirable standards, prior to the Convention. They discussed the most practical franchise system, from a questionnaire sent by Stirling himself from the Salisbury office.[82] The debates were thus largely framed from above, be it by Stirling, or Capricorn's consultants in London -J. Oldham; the director of the Royal Institute for International Affairs, Philip Mason; the missionary L.B. Greaves, the scholars Prof. MacKenzie of Manchester University and Margery Perham from Oxford among them– who also met in the YMCA College of Adult Education in Dunford, where Oldham was a resident fellow.[83] The latter published his views in 1955 under the title *New Hope in Africa*, which soon became a Bible for most Capricornists, and the Citizenship Committees' main inspiration.[84]

Once a final document, which took the name of the "Capricorn Contract", was agreed on, the Citizenship Committees elected delegates of all races for the Capricorn Convention; 138 met in Salima, on the shores of the Lake Nyasa[85] from June 16 to 18, 1956. Salima's significance was mostly symbolic. It mimicked the deliberations of a constitutional conference, where a contract between the three races of East and Central Africa was agreed on. The organizers proudly noted that both Black and White "racialists" were absent from the proceedings. After Stirling had made some opening remarks on Capricorn's history and achievements, three keynote speakers were called in front of the delegates, a European, an Asian and an African, stating how the contract was an answer to the racial problems they were facing.

The European speaker, Susan Wood –a figure of the Kenya branch and spouse to its chairman, Michael Wood– told how the Europeans had progressively lost confidence in their civilizing mission. These were good ideas from Europe that had in Africa produced bitter fruits.[86] At a time when in Kenya domination no longer relied on moral stature, but on police force, she called for educated Africans to lead the country along with Europeans:

81. The Capricorn Movement. Its Aims, Objects and Programme, 1954, RHO Mss Brit. Emp. 390, Box 2 f.3, Clarence Buxton Papers.

82. Agenda for Discussions on Franchise by Capricorn Citizenship Committees, RHO Mss Afr. s. 570, Greaves Papers.

83. Sondashi, "The politics of the voice. An examination and comparison of British pressure groups (Capricorn Africa Society, the Africa Bureau and the Movement for Colonial Freedom), which sought to influence colonial policies and events," 53.

84. Joseph H. Oldham, *New Hope in Africa* (Longmans, 1955).

85. Lake Malawi today.

86. For Susan Wood's impressions on Salima and her own speech see: Susan Wood, *A Fly in Amber* (Kenway Publications, 1997), 99-105.

> Part of our frustration derives from the fact that we have seen ourselves only as givers, and Africans only as receivers. Now through the system of education a new being has come into existence, the educated African, and we have not yet learnt how to live with him. We are learning, but he has not yet been fully integrated into the community. Can we be big enough to allow the reverse side of our nature to develop and receive from the African the contribution he longs and needs to give to the nation?[87]

The leader of Asian elected members at the Kenyan LegCo, A.B. Patel, then spoke, saying all men in Africa were migrants. He complained that among them Asians were always seen as "foreigners" and "intruders", who lived in constant fear of European racial policies and African radical nationalism. It was particularly important, then, that Asians were recognized as part of the population of Kenya:

> Most of the immigrants into East Africa will necessarily stay. Wisdom, therefore, demands that Asians living in East Africa should be given unhampered scope to become citizens of the territories, to develop to their maximum capacity without hindrance of any nature and to feel that they are part of the population of the country. In this way only they can rise to their maximum capacity and make their contribution to rapid and necessary development of East Africa in all directions.[88]

The Asians, especially those from Kenya, were anxious to preserve their status before African nationalists and against the most radical settlers. More than the grant of specific rights, they were seeking recognition as a community, which would have counted in the forthcoming political negotiations between African nationalists and the Colonial Office. On behalf of Herbert Chitepo, the first African to qualify as a barrister in Southern Rhodesia, Mr. Samkange read a speech the former had prepared:[89]

> For those of us who are African, the Convention heralds the realisation of a deeply cherished desire, a desire to live in peace and in harmony with the Europeans and the Asians. It is I believe, deeply true to say that throughout the history of Africa's contact with the West, the Africans have never in the past entertained a desire to rid themselves of the Europeans. Our organizations in all fields of human endeavour have sought to rid ourselves of indignity, oppression and domination. This is still largely true, but it is also true that new organisations are rising which are seeking to get rid of the European. This must be seen in its context and in its proper perspective as the reaction, the natural reaction, to the continued refusal of the Europeans to accord to us that dignity, freedom and security which is the right of every human being.

87. Susan Wood Keynote Speech, The Salima Convention, 16-18 June 1956„ RHO Mss Afr. s. 570 Greaves.

88. A.B. Patel Keynote Speech, The Salima Convention, 16-18 June 1956„ RHO Mss Afr. s. 570 Greaves.

89. On Thomson Samkange see: Terence Ranger, *Are We Not Also Men ? The Samkange Family & African Politics in Zimbabwe 1920-64* (Harare, Le Cap, Portsmouth, Londres: Baobab, David Philip, Heinemann, James Currey, 1995).

> And it is my belief that deep down in their hearts our people even today are not anti-European or Anti-Asian. They become anti-European or anti-Asian in the effort to win that freedom and personal dignity, which the Europeans would deny them.[90]

For the Africans who were present, the Capricorn Contract was an answer to the indignity of colonialism; as much as a way to recognize the cultural standards in which they found their own dignity, by which they were recognized as elites, at least by Europeans, and through which they legitimated their status in the colonial society. In terms of citizenship, their support for the qualified franchise was therefore sincere. The journalist Boaz Omori introduced its principles in the following words:

> You cannot trust a child to handle a sharp knife. And wise parents always keep the knife in safe custody until the child is old enough to realise the danger of misusing it. Similarly, the vote, one of the sharpest cutting edges in modern democracy, can bring disastrous results to a society that misuses it. It is important, therefore, that it should not fall in the wrong hands.[91]

The Capricorn Contract established complex rules to determine who was to be able to vote. It considered the combination of one's education, income, awards and nominations in public service, motherhood and properties, as well as age class: each qualification gave a vote, up to a maximum of six. "Certified lunatics" were disqualified, as well as those serving a prison sentence, or who committed any offence against the electoral laws. Wives qualified by virtue of their husband's properties, but for the polygamous –and the Citizenship Committees had long debated this aspect– only the first wife was to be considered a citizen. In Susan Wood's words, there were to be "no rights without corresponding responsibilities".[92] The Lake Nyasa delegates had set out the following rules on the grant of citizenship:

> A person qualified under any two of the categories numbered (i) to (xv) below is entitled to one vote. For every category beyond two under which he qualifies he is entitled to another vote, up to a maximum of six votes.
>
> EDUCATION
>
> i-Have completed form II of the Secondary Course or its equivalent. ii-The holder of a University degree, or its scheduled equivalent. iii-The holder of a diploma or certificate of proficiency in certain scheduled crafts or trades.
>
> INCOME
>
> iv-Have earned an income in the year before registration of at least £240 OR own unmovable property valued at £480. v-Have earned a taxable income of £1,500 per annum or over for two or more consecutive years.

90. Herbert Chitepo Speech, read by Mr. Samkange, Capricorn Convention, Salima, 16-18 June 1956, Rho Mss Afr. s. 570 Greaves.
91. Address by Boaz Omori, proposing Precept VI, Capricorn Convention, Salima, 16-18 June 1956.
92. Wood, *A Fly in Amber*, 90.

PUBLIC SERVICE

vi-Awarded scheduled Civil and Military British decorations vii-Chairman or honorary Secretary of a scheduled national voluntary organization or recognized national body or past holder of that office for a period of at least three years. viii-Member of Parliament, Aldermen or City Councillor, Chairman of a Town Management Board, Magistrate or the holder of magisterial authority, including Provincial and District Commissioner, or pastholder of any of these offices for a period of at least three years.

OTHER SPECIAL QUALIFICATIONS

ix-The mother of two or more children who have passed Form II or its equivalent x-Field Rank (Major) or above or equivalent in the armed forces, police and voluntary services, including those who had retired with this rank and who have a good record of service. xi-African Chief, Headman or elected Councillor or retired holder of such office for a minimum period of three years. xii-Master Farmer or its equivalent (African) xiii-African Warrant Officer or Sergeant and the equivalent ranks in H.M. armed forces and police or past holder of such rank whose record of service has been good. xiv-Resident farm owner, member of a farmers association, who has cultivated fifty or more acres for four or more years previous to registration, and who is listed by the Natural Resources Board or equivalent authorities.

AGE

xv-Age of forty-two or over.[93]

The text indeed qualified, among Africans and Asians, those who were the most integrated in the colonial system: chiefs and men of arms, landowners and power brokers. The Capricorn Contract also added provisions on land reform, labour relations, education and immigration, on a similar elitist basis. In Kenya, it was designed to reward those who had distinguished themselves in fighting the Mau Mau, or in serving the colonial administration.

In Kenya, the Capricorn branch had been opened in 1954 by Michael Wood, a surgeon, and his wife, Susan, who was involved in the Red Cross and the East African Women's League activities. The branch soon gathered other Europeans, many linked to the Moral Re-Armament –the surgeon Gerald Anderson; Alan Knight, who was heading a Mau Mau detention camp; and the Canon Martin Capon. A couple of politicians also took interest in the society's activities, without assuming official membership: most particularly Kendall Ward as well as the LegCo members Michael Blundell and Wilfried Havelock. Richard Hughes, an architect, was also involved. The Society tried to approach African leaders, but the Emergency made this a hard task, as police control was tight on native or potentially dissident organizations. Joram Amadi, Musa Amalemba and Boaz Omori, both journalists at the Nairobi-based *Baraza*, joined, as did Moody Awori, the son of a canon in

93. The Capricorn Contract, Provision one : The Electoral System, Salisbury, June 12th, 1956, RHO MSS Afr. s. 570 Greaves papers.

the Capricorn Convention, Salima. Kenya Delegates					
Europeans		Africans		Asians, Arabs	
M Wood	Surgeon	B Okeno	Veterinarian	AB Patel	Minister
S Wood	Housewife	P Kariuki	Farm manager	JM Ojal	Biology master, Maseno school
C Ley	Chemist	B Omori	Journalist	GN Shah	Manager of Insurance Co
J Couldrey	Barrister-at-law	F Khamisi	Municipal Councellor, Mombasa	J de Mello	Doctor of Medicine
E Wilkinson	Deputy City African Affairs Officer, Nairobi	T Mirie	Agricultural officer	KV Adalja	Doctor of Medicine
J Raw	Housewife	J Amadi	Journalist	AQ Malik	Barrister-at-law
R Hughes	Architect	S Ndambuke	Chief	Bashir-Ud-Deen	Timber merchant
R Buchanan Allen	Farmer	E Mithamo	District Officer	Abdul Gafur Sheikh	Businessman
AD Wilson	Farmer	R Kinani	Clerk		
C Casey	Farmer	JD Otiende	Clerk to Council, North Nyanza		
F Deen	Employee, Oil Company Nairobi	C Argwings Khodek	Barrister-at-law		
N Hodge	Housewife	S Thakore	Estate Agent, Landlord		
J Couldrey	Housewife				
R Corner	Office manager				
Kendall Ward	Executive Officer, CAS				
C Platt	Farmer				
C Grant	Director of Companies, farmer				
G Solly	Authoress, housewife				
WF Rivers	Oil Company Director				
C Buxton	Retired Provincial Commissioner, Farmer				
Peter Marrian	Farmer				
F Waldrom	Farmer				

Table 6: Kenya's delegates at the Salima Convention. The original document does not mention the race, nor classify delegates according to it, nonethelss such classification shows the overwhelming presence of Europeans, as very few Asians and Arabs partcipated.

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Figure 4: Susan Wood speaking at the Salima Convention, The Rhodesian Herald, June 15, 1956, press cutting in RHO Mss Afr. s. 590 LB Greaves papers

the Anglican Church, and J.D. Otiende, an Alliance and Makerere Old Boy, Capricorn's sole university graduate in Kenya.[94] All were from Western Kenya. The Society did not manage to attract Kikuyu, nor moderate politicians –Tom Mboya rejected several Capricorn invitations– except, seemingly, the Home Guard leader David Waruhiu.[95] Unlike its counterpart in Southern Rhodesia, where Stirling was able to convince African graduates to join, the Kenya Branch remained largely dominated by European members, with a few Asians.[96]

94. Hughes, *Capricorn: David Stirling's African Campaign*, 65-68.

95. Michael Wood, Capricorn Secretary, Kenya Branch to Jonathan Lewis, London Chairman, 22/12/1955, CAP CAS 127 Kenya Branch.

96. As a whole, the Capricorn Africa Society claimed having 1209 members at the end of 1955, of which 546 were European, 135 were Asian and 528 were African, October 1955 Activity Report, East Africa

After Salima, the delegates sought to convince Kenya's politicians of all races that the Contract was a suitable blueprint for a forthcoming constitution. Under the Capricorn principles, they expected Kenya to be self-governed by 1968. European and Asian elections were scheduled for September 1956. Two Capricorn candidates stood for the European seats, in Nairobi –Susan Wood– and Mount Kenya –Peter Marrian.[97] The latter was a 40 year-old farmer, a Shrewsbury Old Boy and former Oxonian, who joined the colonial administration in 1939; during the war he had soldiered with the East African Forces in Abyssinia, Ceylon, Burma, before coming back to Kenya in 1947, where he had a farm; there, he became a local Chairman of the Kenya National Farmers Union. Their electoral manifestos clarify the contradictions and limits of the Capricorn project. They called for a non-racial polity, while reassessing race as one's primary belonging. Susan Wood, underlining the necessity for a common citizenship while protecting "civilized standards", clearly stated that "in the Capricorn Contract which is the basis of this policy, we have the blue print for the future Constitution of Kenya and a plan which would carry us forward to self-government".[98] Nonetheless, multi-racial education was not desirable before the university level; "It would be to the disadvantage of children of all races to extend multi-racial education to the very young until a more advanced cultural and social background has been achieved by the majority of the community". Peter Marrian added, "I do not believe multi-racial education is possible or desirable until : (a) English is the fully accepted and understood common language. (b) There are equals standards in hygiene, living standards, nutrition, dress and teacher qualifications. Meanwhile, the standards and scope of education must be increased for all races".[99] Beyond hygiene and living conditions, races were to remain distinct entities, and inter-marriage was strictly forbidden; "Do you believe in a coffee-colored race as a cure for all our ills ? I am strongly opposed to miscegenation and feel that races should develop as disctinct groups and not as mixtures. There is no evidence to suggest that where the sexes are evenly balanced, miscegenation will occur."[100]

Capricorn was registered as a trust, and thus could not directly present candidates under its banner, as a political party. It never intended to structure itself as such. Presenting candidates –who had few illusions regarding their electoral potential – was a way to influence European liberal leaders –Blundell more particularly– and force them to consider the Capricorn Contract. In Nairobi North, Susan Wood came in third with 166 votes, four times less than the winner; in Mount Kenya, Peter Marrian got 115 votes, against Brigg's 522, the latter being a radical settler leader, advocating for no conces-

Branch, CAP CAS 127, Kenya Branch.

97. The first African elections under the Lyttleton Constitution were to take place several months later, in 1957.

98. Susan Wood: Your Nairobi North Candidate, ICOMM PP.KE.CAS.2.

99. Election manifesto: Peter Marrian for Mount Kenya, ICOMM-PP.KE.CAS..6

100. *Ibid.*. On the fears of miscegenation, see also: Capricorn Chronicle, 1956, KNA MSS 129/18 Capricorn Africa Society.

sions to be made toward other races.[101] On the Asian side, Ibrahim Nathoo got elected under a program which included elements of the Contract, and was appointed Minister for Works.[102]

Capricorn principles interwove civic capacities and cultural practices, citizenship and Western and Christian standards of living. The Society also sought to promote its ideas outside the spheres of official politics. It published a Swahili version of the Capricorn Contract, and supported several educative and social initiatives. Now opened to the public, with its activities relayed in the press, Capricorn had opened two Zebra Clubs in Nairobi and Salisbury, "where its members c[ould]get together for the Society's official meetings, for ordinary social occasions and to accommodate visiting coloured members from other territories […]they could, in addition to their other functions, be run as a form of club for the Society's members". The idea of a club was not trivial; in his book, Oldham was unambiguous about the fact that "an exceptional emphasis need[ed]to be placed on one expression of humanity, namely courtesy"; "Few things do more to smooth racial relations than its manifestation or to exacerbate them when it is lacking".[103] In Nairobi, premises had been acquired for the club in racecourse road, a house with "a large ground floor, serving light refreshments, with a larger room for meetings".[104] Nonetheless, the club was not very successful. In the summer 1956, a Capricorn official complained that it was always empty and had cost the Kenya Branch £250, and the Committee long debated whether or not it should have been run jointly with the UKC.[105] A Zebra Club project on the Coast was soon abandoned, for fear of it becoming a white elephant.[106] Zebra Clubs, though, did not completely overlap UKC's role; it targeted younger members, with an educative purpose. At first a reading room, members eventually met once a week for film shows, plays –including Macbeth–, debates, lectures and essay competitions.[107] With very few African members, though, the older being able to come to the UKC, the place was rendered almost useless.[108]

Capricorn soon organized its monthly evenings at the UKC –as did, earlier, the Citizenship Committees– where many of its officials were members.[109] There, the Society celebrated Salima Conference anniversaries, gathering perhaps a hundred persons around

101. On those elections see: Bennett, *Kenya A Political History. The Colonial Period*, 139-146.
102. Meeting of the Executive Committee, Kenya Branch, 5/10/1956, CAP CAS 54, Kenya File.
103. Oldham, *New Hope in Africa*, 59.
104. Meeting of the Executive Committee, Kenya Branch, 20/03/1956, CAP CAS 127, Kenya Branch
105. Ann Hughes, Meeting of the Executive Committee, Kenya Branch, 20/08/56, CAP CAS 127, Kenya Branch, Meeting of the Capricorn Executive Committee, Kenya Branch, 13/09/1956, CAP CAS 54, Kenya File, Sept.1956.
106. Bob Dick Read, Capricorn Society, Kenya Branch, Executive Secretary to Jonathan Lewis, London Chairman, Capricorn Society, 17/12/1957, CAP CAS 50, Kenya Branch Correspondence.
107. Capricorn Newsletter 1961, CAP CAS 131
108. Like many other Capricorn "social" events, such as the exhibition of paintings made by African children it organized at the British Council in Mombasa, which attracted none of the Africans invited by the Society, Mombasa Times, 20/02/1958, press cutting, CAP CAS, Kenya 1959-60.
109. Bob D. Read to Jonathan Lewis, 25/06/1957, CAP CAS 50, Kenya Branch Correspondence.

speeches, a supper and a film about the conference.[110] Difficulties emerged, however, due to the fact that the Capricorn platform was convincing to neither Europeans nor Africans. The European majority was at best lukewarm towards multi-racial ideas, not to talk about the idea of a common roll. Its most liberal politicians, Blundell, Vasey, assured the Society of their sympathy, but never did so openly. The former had to save settlers' support, and was more moderate than Capricornists, while Vasey had considerable influence over African and Asian politicians – Tom Mboya especially – who were more radical. Asians reproached Capricorn for its lack of consistency, the opacity of its decisions, its open preference for dealing with African leaders. Many African leaders looked with suspicion at the Society's activities. With the qualified franchise, less than 1 or 2% of Africans would have had the right to vote, perpetuating European domination. The Contract proposed a land reform, making White lands available on purchase to Africans, a right only a few could have afforded. All did prefer the UKC to Zebra Clubs, not only because the first provided more comfort, but also because UKC never had an explicit political project. It was open to a larger set of people and political attitudes, and to much more ambiguity than what a Capricorn affiliation would suggest.

Hence Bob Dick Read, the Kenya branch's secretary, tried to gather Capricorn members and sympathizers in a more discreet, closer circle, for African and European leaders to meet regularly:

> Last night I had a dinner party, small, to discuss the formation of an informal, unofficial dining club, meeting once a month in some private room, inviting "interesting" Members of LegCo to address us. The club will consist of Capricorners, although not openly so for several good reasons. Africans indeed will be invited to join, and others. It will be small, and members will be picked for quality. This could not only help develop our African leaders, but also help develop some members of LegCo, etc. by showing them, quite privately, and quietly, that there is such a thing as an African with grey matter in his noddle.[111]

Despite those attempts, the Capricorn failed to convince African and European leaders of the worthiness of their aims. Stirling himself lost interest, and left the Society in September 1958. Moreover, there was a long standing gap between the Society's higher ranks in Salisbury and London, close, if not kin to British power circles, and the lower executives in the local branches, who disliked the latter's casualness and absence of commitment. After Stirling's departure, Michael Wood took over and gave up the Society's political projects. In Kenya, the 1957 elections and the rebellion of African elected members against the Lyttleton Constitution had put an end to multiracialism. Capricorn was then

110. Capricorn Quarterly Newsletter, Sept 1959, ICOMM PP.KE.CAS 3C; Richard Hughes to Jonathan Lewis, 20/07/1959, CAP CAS 90, Kenya 1959-60.

111. Bob Dick Read, Capricorn Society, Kenya Branch, Executive Secretary to Jonathan Lewis, London Chairman, Capricorn Society, 17/12/1957, CAP CAS 50, Kenya Branch Correspondence.

to become a purely educational project, aiming at training tomorrow's good citizens.[112] Adult education became its main purpose.

Michael Wood and the architect Richard Hughes designed proper institutions to fulfil the Society's new goals. The former had visited the Danish Volk High Schools of adult education, and sought to import a similar system to Kenya; before he resigned Stirling had also visited Jeanes School in Kabete, Kenya's training centre for African community development officers. With the support of the Dulverton Trust –the non-political nature of the project was essential to secure the fundings of British and International charities– an "Education for Nationhood" conference was held in Nairobi.[113]

It came to the conclusion that "a concept of Nationhood and common citizenship commanding the loyalty of all races is urgently required and absolutely necessary for the future stability of Kenya"; therefore a Kenya College of Adult Education, later named the College of Kenya Citizenship, was to be founded in haste, as African nationalism progressed:

> The purpose of our college is to show that in our country people of different colour, religion, and culture and people from the countryside and from the Town can by understanding their spiritual and material dependence on each other, achieve a sense of common national purpose. The school aims to give these people, men and women, self-confidence in social and cultural contact with one another; to make them feel that they all have a part to play in the economy of the country; and to give them an understanding of their participation in the responsibilities of Government at every level from rural councils to the Central Parliament. We hope that the College will give the Europeans and Asians a real understanding of the frustrations at present driving the Africans towards racial nationalism, and a sense of responsibility for the removing of these frustrations and a knowledge of how they can help to do so.[114]

The College was meant welcome potential leaders of all races in priority –50 per session–, people who were in a "position of influence in everyday life".[115] It was to be both adult and residential:

> Only by living together in the social and informal atmosphere of a home with all students –regardless of their background– and all members of the faculty sharing together many of the responsibilities and the chores and recreations of the school can the reality of community life in Africa be achieved.[116]

The College proposed a general curricula with courses ranging from six weeks to three months in duration in Governement, History and Economics –"The Growth of Democracy: The British Experience"; "The Rise of the Modern State"; "The History of British Trade

112. R. Hughes to J. Lewis, 18/01/1959, CAP CAS 90, Kenya 1959-1960.
113. CAP CAS 101 Colleges of Citizenship, Kenya, Rhodesias
114. College of Citizenship, KNA MSS 129/18, The College of Kenya Citizenship.
115. KNA MSS 3/189, Kenya Colleges of Citizenship, p.3.
116. *Ibid.*

Unionism in the 19th century"– and specialized courses –agriculture and rural economy; national economy, industry and commerce; a course mostly for women on domestic science, nutrition, handicrafts, child nursing; community development and staff training.[117]

As the College was eventually launched, jointly with the Royal Technical College, the Capricorn Society collapsed in Kenya. In 1960, there were only twelve African members registered.[118] A Society's report admitted that Capricorn had ceased to be multi-racial –if it had ever been– because there was no African participation to speak of, and the local branches were only supported by a few Europeans and still fewer Asians.[119] The March 1961 Newsletter acknowledged that 1960 had been a tough year for Capricorn, with a blatant falling off of interest and participation. In the Federation and in Kenya it said that the growth of "extremisms among Africans 'black' and 'white'"; the overwhelming feeling that "the via media lead nowhere" and that the "co-operation with people of other races [was]fruitless and compromising" accelerated Capricorn's decline.[120] In 1962, another newsletter declared repeatedly – with the hyperbole typical of those pages – that the Nairobi Zebra Club, the only multiracial youth club in the capital, was still supported by thirty members;[121] nonetheless, Moody Awori, one of the Society's few and most committed African member, wrote to J. Lewis two years later that the "Zebra House in Nairobi [had] folded up more than three years ago due to lack of support"; "as you might remember", he added, we mainly used it as a youth club, but the Nairobi youth are mostly interested in pop-singers fan clubs.[122] By mid-1962, the Society's chairman seat was vacant.

According to David Cannadine's *Ornamentalism*, pomp was the great unifying force of the Empire. It shaped the unquestionable allegiance of imperial subjects to the British monarchy.[123] It justified the necessary hierarchies, sustained by a system of imperial honours and a constant display of prestige attires. In this polity hierarchies of class often took precedence over racial categories. In the colonies, this system reproduced and performed hierarchies that the Britons knew at home. Royal tours and official visits, Empire days and Jubilees, all displayed demonstrations of loyalty to the Crown and of allegiance to its hierarchical principles.[124]

117. Newsletter Capricorn, March 1961, ICOMM PP.KE.CAS 3h; KNA MSS 3/189, Kenya Colleges of Citizenship, p.7.
118. S. Sutcliffe to J. Lewis, 23/06/1960, CAP CAS 90, Kenya 1959-60.
119. J. Lewis report to branches in Africa, 1960, CAP CAS 90, Kenya 1959-1960.
120. Newsletter March 1961, ICOMM PP.KE.CAS 3h
121. Capricorn Newsletter, May 1962, CAP CAS 42.
122. Letter from M Awori to Jonathan Lewis, 18/05/64, CAS 42.
123. Cannadine, *Ornamentalism. How the British Saw Their Empire.*
124. Ibid., 114-119 and 116-118.

The argument that the coupling of European clubs and colonial politics suggests is somewhat different. It shows that the performative rituals of imperial power were deeply racialized and what mattered then was the production of recognition and exclusion, which valued some communities and ignored others, mostly Africans. In spite of being termed as private institutions, clubs appeared in the public life of the colony on several occasions. They were part of the imperial mechanics of honours and allegiances, as Europeans' most representative social institution, and therefore the main body by which they were recognized as communities by the authorities. Official tours visited European clubs while ignoring native schools and dispensaries. As such, they contributed to the everyday production of racial exclusion and humiliation.

Race permeated imperial ceremonies, honours and recognitions. Yet they only reflected political and economic exclusion. In addition to receiving official honours as institutions, clubs were also places of political brokerage, which mediated state power, places where settlers met their District Commissioners and where political leaders held meetings. Rather than imperial pomp, the colonial authority rested on many informal mechanisms and patronage relationships, all very personalized ties between administrators and their subjects, involving a great deal of affect and social exchanges, which partly rested on institutions that left room for such informal ties to develop.

The intertwining of sociability and state power was to make clubs an institution of concern to African educated elites. With Capricorn, European liberals thought they could answer such interest by opening multiracial clubs, as platforms to foster mutual understanding within separate development. African nationalists were not fooled by such initiative; they sought to join another kind of clubs, those which afforded connections and whose membership reflected state power. Yet the high informality and intimacy of these white-dominated places rendered their opening to other races a complicated and contested process.

Chapter 4

An African Elite Culture

In 1962, a press article reported that the Nanyuki Club barred African officers from the nearby King's African Rifles barracks to join, despite its constitution stating officers had a statutory right to become members. The White officers resigned in protest. Many European clubs long refused to admit Africans, up to a few months before Independence, and sometimes after.[1] However, such measures do not fully explain why it took so long for Africans to get in. The article also stated that both in Accra and in Nyasaland, where clubs had opened their gates to other races, very few Africans seemed to have been interested in joining[2]. The fact was obvious for Kenya's settlers. These did not see why Africans would take an interest in an institution so foreign to their own culture. As Lorna Hindmarsch, a Kinangop settler, advanced:

> In Kenya, Africans had never been barred officially from hotels and bars, but they could not afford to use them and would have felt uncomfortable and out of place if they had. [...] We never thought about the segregation of Europeans and Africans. They had their entertainments and we had ours. We never thought of gate-crashing their *ngomas*[3]. On the Kinangop, we had no facilities for a hotel or bar except the Club, which was definitely just for Europeans members.[4]

Yet clubs survived Europeans' departure. The African elites made them their own. This puts into question the perpetuation of the colonial legacy.

The UKC had shown the limits of the colonial authorities to frame the political socialization of African nationalists, and what could have been the nursery of an elite to come became a place of contestation of the European rule. However, this experience does not fully exhaust the African genealogy of clubs. Their African appropriation also owes a debt to a series of entwined dynamics, from a nationalist will to overcome the memory of European domination, to the perpetuation of school and professional ethos that a club membership reflected. More broadly, it elucidates both the reproduction and the creolization of colonial categories of elite distinction.

1. "Kenya Club to Bar African Officers", *The Times*, January 1, 1962.
2. Ibid.
3. In Kiswahili, *ngoma* are drums used for celebrations and dances; by extension the word also designates these events.
4. Lorna Hindmarsch, *Beyond Happy Valley. An Autobiography* (Five Senses Education, 2010), 217.

I. A Crossroad Of African Practices

At the very beginning of the 1960s, the Songhor Club, in Nyanza, considered the possibility of opening its doors to Africans. Yet 1962 had not been such a bad year for the club, despite the bad weather and the political turn of events. At the AGM, the chairman conceded that his main worry concerned the racial question[5]. White farmers were leaving one by one, and soon they would be too few for the club to survive on their single support. The coming of Independence and the uncertainties over European's future made the next year worse. Sports events had ceased, the bingo and cinema evenings too, and the bar alone remained open, where around forty members drowned their worries. The 1963 AGM was called, the opening of the club to other races on the agenda, despite the letter of a Mr Wilson stating that it would be better to close the club than support such betrayal. Mr Wilson spoke for himself: 28 members voted in favour of the resolution, against two abstentions.[6] The Committee identified several Africans, most of them local government officers, and wrote to them asking whether they would like to join the club. A year later the club closed down. The Committee expressed its regrets over not having received answers to its letters.[7]

Considering Europeans' will – or constraint – to open clubs to Africans does not address the question of their Africanization. Oginga Odinga, newly appointed minister for internal affairs[8], dedicated his second circular to put an end to racial discrimination in clubs:

> I would like to bring to the notice of all managers of private and non-private clubs that the Government in keeping with its spirit of creating a new national atmosphere in the country, wishes to advise all clubs against any discriminatory constitutions they might have at present. The Government is of the opinion that any constitutions which bar membership solely on grounds of race, colour or creed, is out of step with the times.[9]

The text warded off years of the colour bar, driving it away from its last strongholds. This was not enough, yet, to let in Africans or Asians in numbers, considering that most clubs had already anticipated such changes and had already withdrawn discriminatory provisions from their constitutions. For many rural clubs, their finances and thus their survival were linked to the preservation of a minimal membership that European communities were no longer able to fulfil. Accordingly, the majority of clubs disappeared. One might conjecture, nonetheless, that European reservation regarding non-White applications made discrimination a silent committee affair. In Nairobi, it seems that the most

5. Minutes of the AGM, 1/07/62, KNA MSS 128/41 Songhor Club.
6. Minutes of the AGM, 14/07/63, KNA MSS 128/41.
7. Minutes of the AGM, 26/07/64, KNA MSS 128/41.
8. In 1963-64, when Malcolm MacDonald was still the governor-general, during the transition period to the country's independence.
9. Circular n°2 of 1963, "membership of clubs", KNA RZ 4/44, Ministry of Home Affairs Circulars, also quoted in: Odinga Oginga, *Not Yet Uhuru. An autobiography* (Londres: Heinemann, 1967), 245.

exclusive clubs used this strategy, restricting their opening only to a small minority of Africans and Asians, in order to fend off criticism, and to gain time.

Yet, African interest in those European places was far from self-evident. As we saw with the UKC, their participation in these institutions took time, and was deeply ambivalent. African leaders continued patronizing other places, meeting other publics, practising different styles of civility. Moreover, African entries in clubs never led to an integral mimicry of settlers' social practices. Many club uses disappeared with their Africanization. Polo became marginal, as did most riding activities, bowling and cricket. Eating patterns changed, as did dress codes.

These elements reveal the great diversity by which the colonial legacy and its material culture was appropriated. Such variety reflects the manifold ways through which African genealogies of respectability and self-worth responded to colonialism. Atieno-Odhiambo and Cohen relate the history of *jopango*, Siaya[10] migrants who had to leave and work on settlers' farms or the colonial administration. For these travellers, self-worth was developed by bringing back home attributes of the outside world, that they judged useful or merely positive. Among Luo, it carried the representation of a valued and necessary link to the foreign: clothes first, but also names, objects. The image of the Scott, of Lord Delamere became symbols of prestige and refinement, as well as proof of being able to deal successfully with the outside world. In the 1930s, the most distinguished among the *jopango*, a man known as Okolo ka Yewa, was nicknamed Okola Skotch, the Scotsman; another who had been a shepherd on Delamere's farm -then the colony's largest dairy farm- came back and built a fortune on the basis of his cows' milk, gained the nickname Dalmia-Delamere. A former cook at a white farm came back to Siaya, having discovered tennis: he bought a white outfit and a racket, and used to walk over his village dressed in this uniform, swinging his racket vacuously. On market days in Siaya, another dressed in white tie, to play golf in the midst of stalls and shops.[11]

Luos saw in colonialism a way to expand their network of affinity and seniority, an opportunity which resounded fully with ethnic idioms of accumulation and respectability.[12] These examples show the way African genealogies of honour -that were once subsumed within the term *muthamaki*[13]- were interlaced with the new goods, discourses and prac-

10. A District of Western Kenya, next to Lake Victoria and not far from Uganda's border.

11. E. S. Atieno-Odhiambo and David William Cohen, *Siaya. The Historical Anthropology of an African Landscape* (Nairobi, Athens (OH), Londres: Heinemann Kenya, Ohio University Press, James Currey, 1989), 111-114.

12. Lonsdale, "KAU's Cultures: Imaginations of Community and Constructions of Leadership in Kenya after the Second World War," 119-120.

13. A gĩkũyũ word, which means, at the same time, king, spokesperson, elder, wise man, or even religious leader E. S. Atieno-Odhiambo, "The Kenya Elite: Historical Anthropology and Political Sociology of an African Formation?," in *Kenya: the making of a nation : a hundred years of Kenya's history, 1895-1995* (Maseno: Institute of Research / Postgraduate Studies, Maseno University, 2000), 139-140; Muoria, *Writing for Kenya. The Life and Works of Henry Muoria*, 306; John Middleton and Greet Kershaw, *The Central Tribes of the North Eastern Bantu* (London: International Afircan Institute, 1965), 31-33; Shaw, *Colonial Inscriptions. Race, Sex and Class in Kenya*, 36-37; In the allegedly age-class societies

tices introduced by the colonial occupation. They show the profusion of ways and arts developed to cope with colonialism, in order to engage in the opportunities it offered. Hence a great variety of cultural "bricolages" sprouted up, whose invention went far beyond a mere dialectic between the colonizers and the colonized.

Up to the 1950s, alcohol consumption among Africans – limited to native liquors, before imported European beer was allowed – took place in households and their vicinity, and in a non-commercial way, as the brews were home-made. The search for independent fundings for the Local Native Councils led to the authorization of selling and drinking commercial brews in dedicated, licensed places. Alcoholic consumption grew, and by the end of the 1950s it took place in beer-halls and clubs, for all who could afford to pay. The administrators' will that those places be ran by men they could trust led to an increasing masculinization of their control and patronage. It gave strength to the idea that alcoholic consumption could only take place in particular places and proper situations.[14] As such, the very term "club" to designate those places originated in law.

Meanwhile, public places dedicated to leisure existed in Nairobi since –at least– the early 1920s. The Pumwani Memorial Hall, built to honour the memory of all natives who had died on the WW1 East African front, was a multi-purpose place belonging to the Municipal Council, with a large hall, a boxing ring, a reading room and a tea bar. It organized dances, all sorts of meetings and tea parties. It seems that the gatherings were organized on an ethnic basis.[15]

Among Africans, the first urban associations were self-help ethnic groups. Their primary aim was to raise funds collectively, for the benefits of those in need. For urban migrants, it was an answer to the new risks incurred by city life. The associations supported individuals in case of accident and the burial of the dead in their native land. They enforced new ties of trust between men far from their village, drawn along ethnic lines. For ethnicity to retain its value, associations combined practical function with moral purpose. They enforced ethnic rules of honour and self-respect. They prevented urban migrants from corrupting the tribe's name, as they controlled women's migration, always suspected of enriching themselves by prostitution, now freed from their kin's patronage.[16] Explaining the purpose of a newly founded Abhaluhya Association in Eldoret,

of pre-colonial Kenya, Atieno-Odhiambo counts around a dozen works in vernacular languages that define seniority, notability, influence and ascendency Atieno-Odhiambo, "The Kenya Elite: Historical Anthropology and Political Sociology of an African Formation?," 140.

14. Willis, *Potent Brews. A Social History of Alcohol in East Africa, 1850-1999*, 150-158.

15. White, *The Comforts of Home: Prostitution in Colonial Nairobi*, 185, 191; Bodil Folke Frederiksen, "African Women and their colonisation of Nairobi: Representations and realities," ed. P. J. Lane and Andrew Burton, *Azania. Journal of the British Institute in Eastern Africa* XXXVI-XXXVII (2001-2002): 225; Joseph B. Wanjui, *My Native Roots. A Family Story* (Nairobi: University of Nairobi Press, 2009), 24; Kikuyu tea parties are documented in: Bodil Folke Frederiksen, ""The present battle is the brain battle": Writing and Publishing a Kikuyu Newspaper in the pre-Mau Mau Period in Kenya," in *Africa's Hidden Histories: Everyday Literacy And Making the Self*, ed. Karin Barber (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), 308-309.

16. On Nairobi see: John Lonsdale, "Town life in colonial Kenya," *Azania* 36-37, no. 1 (2001): 211-216.

its secretary wrote to the authorities:

> Our Association wishes to deal with the following [...]: Entertainment of prominent visitors and guests, funeral expenses, enquiring and reporting of any escaping or running away of women and unmarried girls intentionally to start in prostitution. Advising parents of school age children to attend schools, and many other welfare matters as may be considered by the Association.[17]

Most ethnic groups who had a significant migrant workforce seem to have developed similar organizations. Again in Eldoret, a Kikuyu Upcountry Fraternal Society sought to gather all adult men and women of Kikuyu tribe, forming an association of which the aims were clearly defined:

> The aims of K.U.F.S. shall be:
>
> (a) To unite socially all members of the Kikuyu tribe in the upcountry of Kenya.
>
> (b) To stop bad and shameful deeds by Kikuyu fellow members which in the opinion of K.U.F.S. is disrespecting the tribe.
>
> (c) To help financially and by action any member of the society in case of emergency.
>
> (d) To help in any way possible; incapable destitutes of Kikuyu tribe wherever the Society exists.
>
> (e) To control and check Girls, Juveniles and women of Kikuyu tribe leaving their homes and hide in the Towns without their parents consent.
>
> (f) To Seek Government's advice and assistance in dealing with persons affected by the foregoing sub-section (b&c) and any other matter to empower the society in its works.
>
> (g) To promote cooperation and interest of the Society and of the whole Kikuyu tribe.[18]

The association was not only an urban phenomenon. It was also a migrant one, responding to the transformations of labour, production and communities that colonialism had imposed on Kenya's agrarian societies. In the Central Province, after the Second World War, associations carried the new social ties and solidarity patterns that Kikuyu then tried to form and enforce. Trust and solidarity was firstly based on tribe, but Kikuyu were as strongly divided into age-classes. These shaped the way institutions were formed, the latter named after the year their members were circumcised. In 1949, the Nuthu Age Association was formed in Thika to gather all men circumcised in 1922 –nuthu referred to 1922, the year the shilling replaced the Indian Rupee as the colony's currency, at the rate

17. Secretary, Abaluhya Association, Eldoret Branch to DC Eldoret, 27-07-1945, KNA ADM 15-9-6, African Tribal Associations.

18. The Kikuyu Upcountry Fraternal Society, Eldoret. Rules & Regulations, 20-09-1948, KNA ADM 15-9-6.

of half[19] a shilling per Rupee– then aged 42, to foster their children's education, assist their widows, share their skills in agriculture, act for the welfare and self-help of the group, find jobs and promote efficiency in labour[20]. Kikuyu youths also formed association to collectively respond to their own issues along tribal lines. Everywhere ethnic traditions were deemed essential to preserve one's dignity in the face of intense social change. In Fort Hall, a Kikuyu Youth Association was founded, dedicated to Kikuyu welfare. Its aim was to preserve Kikuyu tribal customs, considered critical for African progress.

> " 1.The objects of the Association and to explain to all that the Association is a non-political body but is mostly devoted to the social well being of the Kikuyu people and would endeavour to efforts so as to bring a new outlook to the native way of life at the same time preserve anything good in our tribal culture. It is vital for the progress of the mass Africans that a regeneration to many tribal customs and approach to present days problems is brought about and urgently. 2.The Kikuyu Marriage Custom to-day known as "The Bride Price" would also take good time in the deliberations of the meeting[21]. "

The question of dowries was especially crucial, in a context of fast-growing inequalities between Africans, where a proper marriage was still the only entrance to full adulthood and self-worth.

The issue of dignity also drove the many Soldiers' Unions which flourished after the war, as fighters came back unemployed from the campaigns of Malaysia and Burma. The Murang'a Ex-Soldiers Union was thus aimed at remembering the dead and raise funds for their widows and orphans, as well as helping ex-servicemen in need:

> " (a) To deside [sic.] upon a memorial object in Murang'a District in memory of those who given their lives for sake of their country as well as our British Empire[…].
>
> (b) To help people whose relatives died in the war and to help the orphans; to trade so that to make enough money as to support in their welfare and educational lives.
>
> (c) To maintain the life of unemployed district ex-servicemen[22]. "

By calling for a memorial and writing to the DC, soldiers' unions announced their loyalty to the authorities. They wanted their sacrifice to the Empire to be recognized, and called for a criticism of colonial rule as regards to what they thought were imperial principles of trusteeship and justice. Murang'a District Ex-Soldier Association asked for the abolition of the *kipande*, Kenya's identification document which prevented an African from travelling freely beyond his or her assigned reserve:

19. *Nusu* or *nuthu* in Swahili.

20. Rules and Regulations of the Nuthu Age Association, 15/08/1949, KNA DC MUR 3/1/11, Kikuyu Miscellaneous Associations.

21. The President, Kikuyu Youth Association, Fort Hall to the District Commissioner Fort Hall, 1st November, 1946, KNA DC MUR 3-1-11.

22. Murang'a District, Ex Soldiers Union, KN A DC MUR 3-1-11, Administration, Kikuyu Miscellaneous.

> In accordance with modern democratic principles, we condemn any suggestion of retaining KIPANDE in any form of identification which does not exist in United Kingdom or other countries, which fought for humanitarianism of mankind.[23]

In the army, African soldiers had learnt to read and write English, and had acquired many technical skills, chiefly mechanics. To them, one of the bitterest injustices of colonial rule was the predominance of Asians in the domains of service and commercial activities, especially in the reserves. One of their strongest demands was thus to take over garages and mechanical jobs from Asians, as well as taxis and hotels:

> We refuse that Indians must not get posts in the District Offices where African affairs are concerning, Africans must replace them. […] We want to establish co-operated store and shops in the following places: Fort Hall, Maragua, Sabasaba, Makindi, Thika and Nairobi. We don't want Indians to buy our products from the reserves.[24]

Writing to the DC, asking permission to act against Asians, prostitutes or idle youth, those associations expressed loyalty to the authorities, while defining new forms of justice that they wanted the latter to enforce. Forming an association then, and declaring its status to the DC, was at first a way to be recognized, and to claim it acted on a legitimate basis, on behalf of the state, even if against other Africans who had different views on colonialism and its consequences.

All these associations had in common the gathering of Kikuyu men around a goal whose fulfilment, nonetheless, concerned all Africans. Their educated members, new teachers or former soldiers, wrote their minutes in English to be sent to the administration. Yet their concern went beyond the small circle of educated Africans who led them. They formed civic communities, which concerned themselves with solidarity and responsibility at a time of tremendous social change. These changes were perceived with much anxiety as a collapse of traditions, discipline and morals, all threatened by cities and modern life, but whose respect commanded dignity and self-worth.[25] Inspired by a new collective belonging but always among the tribe, they tried to express new rights and obligations in response to such moral crisis.[26]

None of these social institutions was a club, though, with a proper committee, a list of co-opted members, and a truly private space. Yet they developed at the same time,

23. Resolutions passed by the conference of the Murang'a District Ex-Soldier Association Fort Hall, 6th October 1946, KNA DC MUR 3-1-11, Administration, Kikuyu Miscellaneous.

24. The Point of Association on May-7-1946, KNA DC MUR 3-1-11, Administration, Kikuyu Miscellaneous.

25. Lonsdale, "KAU's Cultures: Imaginations of Community and Constructions of Leadership in Kenya after the Second World War," 116-118.

26. On tribal civic associations see: M. Tamarkin, "Tribal Associations, Tribal Solidarity, and Tribal Chauvinism in a Kenya Town," *The Journal of African History* 14, no. 2 (1973): 257–274; Robert E. Maxon, "A Kenya Petite Bourgeoisie Enters Local Politics: The Kisii Union, 1945-1949," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 19 (3 1986): 451–462; Matthew Carotenuto, "Riwruok E Teko: Cultivating Identity in Colonial and Postcolonial Kenya," *Africa Today* 53, no. 2 (2006): 53–73.

and their objects differed from civic associations. In Murang'a, the Kangundu Club, despite being formed by Kikuyu, did not specify the tribe of its members, and wrote its constitution in Kiswahili.[27] Members were merely chosen among those who were able to pay an entry fee of 100 shillings, and a five-shilling yearly subscription. The club had an elected board, with a president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, vice-secretary and vice treasurer. Members met twice per month. Its object was to acquire a place dedicated to reading books and magazines –for educational purposes– to propose games of all sorts, to play football and other sports, and to "to sing and dance on the music of the Whites"[28] Through economic discrimination, the club's development was closely related to class formation, of which distinctive mark was the local appropriation of European culture.

Other African clubs were created or encouraged by the colonial administration, as part of a larger moral and civic project. Sports had long been used by the colonial authorities to socialize Africans, a task first given to junior administrative officers. After the war, the increasing specialization of administrative tasks made such job a prerogative of community development officers, supervised by a colony sports officer. Athleticism, "Olympic games" and football leagues were then organized, and teams were trained for the Commonwealth and Olympic games.[29] African Sports Clubs were also created by colonial administrators. One was created in Kisumu in 1948; the officer in charge wrote "we need to encourage and instil keeness in Kisumu African Youths towards Sports and Physical exercises, and whereas it is absolutely essential to form a permanent organization to the achievement of the above mentioned object; it is hereby resolved to establish a SPORTS CLUB".[30] The club, whose aims were "to develop keenness in Sports, Physical, Mental, Social and Moral exercises", was open to all Africans, provided they could pay an entrance fee. Sport had long been recognized as a powerful civilizing agent, which encouraged loyalty to the imperial project.

Yet African clubs supported by the administration really flourished during the Mau Mau War, as part of the "second prong" to stifle the rebellion by fostering the formation of a class of richer, loyal Africans. In 1953, the Swynnerton Plan authorized the gathering of plots and the grant of title deeds in the reserves, as it opened access to credit and to crops that were forbidden to Africans before: tea, coffee and pyrethrum. It benefited those the administration found to be its best allies during the war, to whom those opportunities were given in reward. Similarly, the Africanization of Provincial and Local Administration

27. Kangundu Club, Kanuni Na Sheria, 4/05/1945, KNA DC MUR 3/1/11.

28. "kuimba dansi ya kizungu", *ibid.*

29. On the organization of Olympic sports in the colony in the late 1940s and early 1950s, see KNA DC KAPT 1-3-17, Sport Trophies, and for a general on the administration of native leisure by Community Development Officers see: Askwith, *From Mau Mau to Harambee: memoirs and memoranda of colonial Kenya*, 153-157.

30. Kisumu Africa, Sports Club – 1948, KNA PC NZA 3/1/511.

benefited those who were perceived as educated loyalists.[31] Among these initiatives, the colonial authorities sought to encourage the formation of Young Farmers Clubs. Explicitly "non-political", they targeted both sexes who attended primary and intermediate schools, and were run like a club. Applicants had to be proposed and seconded by members, to be elected at club meetings, and they had to prove their worthiness by cultivating a plot on their family's land. The constitution templates issued by the Department of Agriculture stated that their aims were:

> (1) To improve education in its true sense – not the sort of education that too many people believe in which is nothing more than being able to read and write, but to form the young members character, to learn to be good and honest citizens and to guide others by their example of living a good life and to help, in every way possible, their fellow men. (2) To bring together the young people of both sexes of the area in which they live with a view to developing individual capacity and ability to serve the community. To stimulate amongst them a sense of the importance of the life in the country side and in particular the furtherance of Agriculture to the community? (3) To help parents with education of the very young in their homes by teaching them to be honest, obedient, clean and helpful to their parents. Members should teach parents, by example, to improve their homes, to be clean and happy in their shambas, to be orderly and fertile, producing plentifully so that children may have good and ample food and grow up strong and healthy. Remember that THE PROSPERITY OF THE COUNTRY DEPENDS ON THE PROSPERITY OF ITS AGRICULTURE. (4) To maintain and in fact improve relations between the various races in Kenya; not only between indigenous races but also between them and the people who have come from abroad to make their homes in Kenya.[32]

The formation of Young Farmers Clubs and Farmers Clubs accompanied the Swynnerton Plan. Many were eventually founded by Africans. In Nyanza where land reform faced uncompromising opposition, a group of farmers proposed to create a club in Nyabondo, to gather the best farmers in the Kabete area. They considered their methods much more advanced than those of other farmers, and thus wished to own a plot in common in order to promote themselves. They were, nonetheless, very divided when they had to choose their first president. One candidate was the former president of the local committee in charge of land reforms, who had failed in implementing them in the region; a majority of members accused him of incompetence.[33] In Nyabondo like elsewhere in late 1950s Kenya, the emergence of clubs went along with the formation of new inequalities in the rural areas, fuelled by land privatization and their uneven allocation; all processes

31. Branch, *Defeating Mau Mau, Creating Kenya. Counterinsurgency, Civil War, and Decolonization*, 121 & 169-171; Berman, *Control & Crisis in Colonial Kenya. The Dialectic of Domination*, 369-371.

32. Suggested Rules for Young Farmers Club, Department of Agriculture, Nyeri, 7th April, 1953, KNA DAO KBU 1-3-37 Young Farmers Club.

33. The week ending on May, 3rd, 1958, Nyabondo-Nyakach Location, report by Wycliffe A. Onyango, self-help team, to DC Kisumu, KNA DC KSM 1/18/11, Nyakach.

justified by the promise of increased productivity. Everywhere, they institutionalized the new hierarchies born of the opening of education and commercial agriculture to Africans. Youth Clubs and Farmers Clubs promoted a pattern of respectability and domesticity peculiar to the "civilizing mission" of the Second Colonial Occupation, amplified by the "second prong" of Mau Mau counter-insurgency from the mid-1950s. The East African Women's League, for instance, took charge of creating African Women's Clubs since 1954, where white women taught African wives and mothers the standards of European domesticity: cooking, hygiene, child care and education.[34]The African clubs were hardly similar to their European or Asian counterparts. They supervised the youth under the paternalistic supervision of Community Development Officers and none of them served alcohol, proposed games or even an open sociability, all of which remained exclusive to European and Asian clubs.

Most African clubs came later, burgeoning in the late 1950s. In 1958, near Kakamega, a Butsotso Progressive Club was founded, in order to "aquaint the youth of Butsotso to one another and encourage them in education, good social and economical life". This was to be achieved "through lectures made by the invited persons; and by holding sports and games, music, concerts, dances, plays and other entertainments".[35] The Membership was open to any teacher or student having successfully passed primary education, as well as any educated person living in the area, for an entry fee of one shilling. The club was run by a committee and six officials. Its founders were an Ingotse teacher, a member of the local African District Council, a schoolmaster and a Revenue clerk. The vice-secretary was a girl from Kaimosi Girls School, according to the Provincial Administration report.[36] The club was soon closed, as its aims were deemed better served –and controlled– by the local Community Development authorities. Moreover, the administration found that a club that catered to an educated minority might have irritated the others.[37] The surviving archives suggest that there may have been many such initiatives. They show the enthusiasm of a minority of Africans for education and its benefits, the promise of material prosperity and the better life it involved. Yet such promise could only be fulfilled by excluding the uneducated, with whom those teachers and civil servants had little in common. Moreover, the provincial authorities were not willing to delegate their prerogatives to independent associations. The latter were subjected to licensure, and all public meetings of more than 50 people were to be declared, a condition that restricted the possibility of forming a club.

Thirty kilometres south of Butsotso, the founding members of the Idakho Gentry Club

34. On the formation of such club in Njoro, see: Nellie Huxley, *Nellie. Letters from Africa*, ed. Elspeth Huxley (London: Weidenfeld / Nicolson, 1973), 198-199.

35. Butsotso Progressive Club Constitution, KNA DC KMG 2/1/106, Butsotso Progressive Club.

36. Butsotso Progressive Club, D.O. Lurambi to DC KMG, 2/01/1958, KNA DC KMG 2-1-106 Butsotso Progressive Club.

37. DC North Nyanza to The Chairman, Butsotso Progressive Club, 3/02/1958, KNA DC KMG 2-1-106.

sought to avoid these constraints. They limited their gatherings to around fifteen people, meeting in one member's house, the only type of venue considered by the administration to be private. The club was named after a Luhya clan and its main activity was to raise funds for common entertainment such as Christmas or New Year's Eve celebrations. Members met for luncheons and Catholic prayers.[38] Judging from the club's extant minutes, an important point seems to have been the discussion of undesirable members. This suggests that a belonging to the Idakho "gentry" was a matter which was much debated; the discussions took a quarter of the time dedicated to the clubs' administrative meetings.[39] The club asked for an entry fee and an annual subscription, and typewrote its committee minutes in English. It showed a great deference toward the authorities, declaring all its meetings to the provincial administration, far beyond legal obligations. Idhako members were also preoccupied by alcoholic brews: the club was a way to drink far from the eyes of common Kenyans. A local chief, in his report to the administration, alleged that the club had started this way: it was a response to the embarrassment felt by a new class of Africans who wanted to drink without their reputation and status being affected.[40]

African clubs also cropped up in larger towns. Atieno Odhiambo relates that in the Luo estate of Kaloleni in Nairobi, numerous exclusive spaces carried the name of club. The Orindi Club welcomed the followers of the Gor Mahia Football Club – Luo's best football team – while the Nyanza Bar Club had been founded for administrative clerks. There was also a club for Ugenya people – a constituency of Siaya county – and a Kaloleni Club for the middle administrative ranks, whose evolution over thirty years shows the great plasticity of the institution. At first it was a political circle for the followers of the politicians Argwings Khodek and Tom Mboya, then a place for music and entertainment, and eventually a debating club, with a strong focus on football.[41] In Nairobi's emerging African clubland, most clubs were tribe-based, a belonging on which depended the common sense of hierarchy and political affinities. Class only became meaningful when framed by the particular ethnic narratives in which it was defined and enunciated.

II. Exceptions That Proved The Rule

For the many small clubs of rural Kenya, opening membership to other races became a matter of survival as Independence approached. Many disappeared as settlers left, not being able to attract new members. Yet, in cities where an important European popula-

38. Andrew Muchenditsi, Secretary, Idakho Gentry Club to DC Kakamega, Idakho Gentry Club – Entertainment 1960, 16/12/1960, KNA DC KMG 2/1/112, Idakho Gentry Club.

39. Chief Idakho, Report Fupi Ya Idakho Gentry Club, 27/12/59, KNA DC KMG 2/1/112, Idakho Gentry Club.

40. Chief Idakho, Report Fupi Ya Idakho Gentry Club, 27/12/59, KNA DC KMG 2/1/112, Idakho Gentry Club.

41. Atieno-Odhiambo and Cohen, *Siaya. The Historical Anthropology of an African Landscape*, 44.

tion remained, Africanization became a complex issue. Clubs were eager not to appear as racist institutions, opposed to the new masters of an independent country. Legalistic associations, the idea of Africanization contradicted their very nature. They were places of domestic and intimate matters, where social interactions were meant to take place within a community which shared common cultural practices and standards. Conversational styles and themes, humour and respect, gender relationships, all was supposed to be obvious and unwritten. All along the seven decades of British presence, clubs had carried the cultural features which naturalized Europeans as a race; their lifestyle, manners, and collective memory. The feeling of comfort associated with clubs came from their social and racial homogeneity.

At first, Europeans stood firm. As the Caledonian was a Scottish society and the Royal Society of St George an English one, European clubs were to be kept for the Whites, for their welfare and the preservation of their cultural peculiarities. This argument appeared in the mid-1950s, when the question of opening clubs to other races started to be raised. Racial discrimination became increasingly justified in cultural terms. J. F. Lipscomb, a farmer settled in Kenya since the 1920s wrote:

> Now a few Africans have advanced to our standards, but they are still very few, and one of the reason that perpetuates the restriction of hotels for Europeans only is the impossibility of distinguishing between the truly civilized Africans and the many who merely ape our standards. A similar consideration applies where Asians are concerned, but with neither race is the bar concerned with skin colour. It is concerned with table manners and personal habits, and anyone who has ever been forced to use lavatories which are in common use, as is the case sometimes on trains, will appreciate the force of this reason. […] In the use of clubs, of course, there is no question but that generally each race will keep apart. It is the essence of clubs that they should be able to restrict in any ways they please both their membership and the right of their members to introduce guests, and this is not a matter for argument.[42]

More than table manners and dress codes, matrimonial customs and miscegenation preoccupied Europeans. It was unthinkable for them to admit polygamists in clubs; and for the most liberals and multi-racialists among them miscegenation remained inconceivable.[43] Nonetheless, Independence involved the opening of clubs to other races. Most clubs contemplated this possibility from the early 1960s, as a necessary evil. The Muthaiga Country Club long discussed the best way to operate. Several Assembly Meetings took place at the club. In April 1962, the Committee sent members a letter, along with an enclosed questionnaire:

> At the Special General Meeting of the Club […] the members by an overwhelming majority made it clear that they wished membership to continue on

42. John Francis Lipscomb, *White Africans* (Londres: Faber & Faber Ltd., 1955), 118-119.
43. Ibid., 119-120.

> a European basis. Submitting this recommendation originally, the Committee intended to supplement it by making it possible for members of the other races to come to the Club as guests of the Committee on appropriate occasions. Since there is some confusion here, partly owing to the wording of their circular, the Committee would wish to explain that after closest consideration it was felt that action and attitude in regard to private guests by the few might cause offence or discomfort and prove awkward to the majority of members and their wives. […] It is a difficult problem, and there is no doubt that a general relaxation might be interpreted by some of our members, doubtless in all sincerity, in a manner which might give great offence to the majority. […] The Committee is always conscious of the history and nature of the Club, and its members are not prepared to advocate or to carry out courses which are not acceptable to the mass of members, because of timorous imaginings or real victimisation — it is considered that it would be better for the Club to end altogether than that it should be distorted against the members' wishes.[44]

Opening the club to Africans and Asians would have hurt the other members, but maybe the former could be allowed in as guests. The enclosed questionnaire therefore proposed several solutions, in order to cope with political pressures while maintaining the club unity and the comfort of its members. It proposed to open the club to individuals of other races, who would be guests of the Committee provided they would be of exceptional standing; or, instead, to trust members on the choice of their guests as long as they would only be allowed for lunch on weekdays, or in private lounges; or a complete opening to all races, provided Africans and Asians would not stay overnight. Muthaiga could recognize that there were exceptional individuals among Africans and Asians, but it was out of the question to consider them at par with other members. In most clubs this attitude prevailed.

III. At Par On the Sports Field Only

Asians and Africans entered European clubs in different ways. The former had long been engaged in sports competitions against Europeans, thanks to their own network of clubs. Moreover, sports were distinct practices. The development of local sports federations contributed to separate their organization and sociability from the clubs which housed them. The Kenya Lawn Tennis Association, founded in 1922; the Kenya Cricket Association founded in 1953 and the Kenya Squash Rackets Association founded in 1954, organized multi-racial tournaments for sportsmen of all races. They reflected the relative independence of sports, which were organized according to a specific, universal body of rules which framed sporting exchanges.[45]

44. Muthaiga Country Club, E.A. Jeffreys, Secretary to members, 27/04/1962, RHO MSS Afr. s. 1676, Christie Miller papers, Vol. 2.

45. On the "autonomous field of sports", see: Bourdieu, "Esprits d'État," 178.

Race relations and proximity differed from one sport to another: tennis, hockey and cricket allowed the confrontation of different races. Through cricket, Europeans and Asians put their rivalry at play. These matches consolidated segregation, forcing its performance through sports. Asians and Europeans could confront each other on a cricket pitch, but the former had no access to the latter's clubhouse, when the match took place in a European club. In a 1986 interview for Parklands Sports Club Jubilee, Hassanally Rattansi, who had played for the Asian Nairobi Gymkhana in the mid-1950s, remembered the humiliation peculiar to these matches:

> Sports were strictly segregated so when we played against the Europeans, it was on the basis of master/servant as the underlying shadow [...] At the first test match played at Parklands, for which I was selected, we were not allowed into the Parklands Sports Clubhouse. They had put a tent outside for us and there was a hole in the ground for our toilet. At teatime, the captain condescended to come and have a cup of tea with us, but we couldn't go inside.[46]

Yet the Kenya Golf Union, entirely run by the European clubs, only recognized Europeans as potential players. There was no public golf course in Kenya at the time of Independence, and several decades after. The Kenya Lawn Tennis Federation was different. It organized the Kenya Open, opened to all races. This led to the formation of a community of European and Asian sportsmen in which there was less and less discrimination. Several Asians were excellent players. Yashvin Shretta, a lawyer trained at te Honourable Society of the Middle Temple, started playing tennis at the Sikh Union Club, and then at the Gymkhana in Kisumu where his father owned a profitable business. His father and hs brothers were also players, engaging through tennis in the patterns of respectability allowed by sporting competition. Back in Kenya where he had become a lawyer at the High Court, he joined the Nairobi Gymkhana, then Parklands Sports Club as its first non-European member. Parklands was an excellent sports club, but one whose members were mid-ranking civil servants, teachers and expatriates, all lower segments of European society. As an institution, it placed more of an emphasis than did other, more prestigious clubs on competition than on social events, hence the uncommon denomination of "sports club". Parklands sought to attract the best players, and Y. Shretta, just back from England, felt more comfortable there than in Asian clubs.

YASHVIN SHRETTA: Just before Independence [Parklands members]approached me, since I was Kenya's number one tennis player. And they said : "please, we would you like to join our club ? We want you to join our club"... And they used to say "we are interested in the change, perhaps you could help us in bringing the change"...And so I joined, I joined the Parklands Sports Club, later I joined Nairobi Club, and I also joined Muthaiga Golf Club.

46. Kahora, *Parlands Sports Club. Centennial Anniversary Edition*, 55.

D.C.: Ok. And at the time you joined these clubs, did you really feel comfortable, or did you feel awkward, did you fear to make any mistake ?

Y.S.: No, no…Once I joined they accepted me very easily, in fact I was educated in England. So for me it was just from one home to another, so I had no problem mixing with them. […] In fact what had happened is that we thought Nairobi Gymkhana was a superior tennis club. All the top players played in our club […] they might have considered it was a privilege for them to have us in that club. You know because you are top in sports, and they wanted some better players. [They were] middle class Europeans, and mostly expatriates who came [to Kenya] to work. Like in schools, or they were in contracts here, but they were not these business people or farmers like the ones in Muthaiga Country Club.[47]

Sporting competitions permitted the creation of ties that went beyond racial prejudice, but remained limited to the field. Baldev Aggarwal, also a high level tennis player at the Gymkhana in the 1950s, says that the competition suspended racial categories:

D.C.: When in the cricket team ; or in the hockey team ; or in tennis you played against the Europeans, was it a way to challenge Europeans' political domination ?

B.A: No, no…It was a tennis tournament ; it might have been a tennis championship, anybody could go and play. You were not showing off to anyone ; you were trying to make money and win, you didn't care who was there or against you, nobody ever had that thought to show Europeans…No…I don't think Europeans were trying to show us how good they were in tennis or cricket or soccer, you know…But sportsmen are different from people in general, sportsmen would easily mix but the people who look after the sports were the ones, who would stick their noses in, you know the management they had to follow some instructions at that time, they kept these communities away from you.[48]

The disappearance of colonial categories was, nonetheless, exceptional. It only concerned the colony's best players. Moreover, people like Shretta – or Baldev Aggarwal, another tennis champion – came from wealthy families, had been educated in England and were remarkable tennis-men: Aggarwal played Wimbledon in the 1950s, Shretta was Kenya team's Captain during the 1974 Davis Cup. Moreover, Asians integration in European clubs was made easier, as both communities progressively thought themselves as threatened minorities. The tensions between Asians and Europeans, which had culminated in the 1920s, waned progressively.

African memberships in white clubs was different, albeit always determined by sporting excellence. Forced to open the golf clubs' gates, whites first proposed that their caddies become members. In the 1950s, those of the Royal Nairobi Golf Club established a Kibera Golf Club next to the former. The course was located on a plot allocated to Nubian ex-soldiers from the King's African Rifles, whose children now trained as caddies. A dusty

47. Interview with Yashvin Shretta, 13/11/2008.
48. Interview with Baldev Aggarwal, 18/11/2008.

9-holes – golfers said they played on "browns" rather than on "greens" – it disappeared in the mid to late 1960s. The caddies players of Kibera became Royal's and Railway's first African members.[49] Their talent had been noticed by a few players at Railways, then a purely European club, who proposed that they play a match. The Africans won, and the losers proposed them for membership. Several of those former caddies – Mohammed Rajab, Buhran Marjan, Yussuf Khamis – became professional players by the early 1970s.[50]

The African "pioneers" in golf – as they are now recalled – were thus caddies. John Mucheru, also a caddie and Limuru's first African member, won five times the Kenya Open amateur tournament, the country's hardest competition, between 1979 and 1989, while serving as the Kenya Team Captain for more than fifteen years. Many became golf professionals, with all the statutory ambivalence of such status. Members by virtue of their golfing talents, they were different from other members who had a different type of membership. Not educated, they could not hold official positions. They were also much poorer than the other members. Mucheru managed to live comfortably, thanks to a golf shop he opened in Nairobi, patronized by the new African elites.[51] James Kahugu, Sigona's first African member, was a caddie and a waiter at the Nairobi Norfolk Hotel, before being asked to become the club's assistant secretary, where he later turned a professional golfer.[52]

IV. An Elite Attribute

For Europeans, clubs were a cultural proof of their ability to dominate and rule. Their refinement justified privilege. The Muthaiga was often cited repeatedly as the epitome of two thousand years of British civilization. The sophistication of its ways, a racial preserve, contrasted with African manners, deemed backward and anachronistic.[53] Clubs and sports were part of an embodied ruling culture. It naturalized European pretensions to govern.[54] Some aspects of this culture were peculiar to Kenya, unevenly imported from British traditions and differing somewhat from the other colonies of Africa. Soldiers and

49. Interview with Muhidin Ebrahim Doka, 22/02/2009. His father was one of the Kibera players who became a member at Royal.

50. Interview with Haddad Mohammed, 1/06/2009. Haddad Mohammed is Rajab's son.

51. Tina L. Quick, Jonathan Quick, and Robert W. Burdick, *Rhinos in the Rough. A Golfer's Guide to Kenya* (Nairobi: Kenway Publications, 1993), 18.

52. Ibid., 140.

53. A. McClintock — who uses Walter Benjamin's concepts — writes that the colonial situation involved the invention of anachronic space, in which "the agency of women, the colonized and industrial working class" are "disavowed and projected onto anachronistic space: prehistoric, atavistic and irrational, inherently out of place in the historical time of modernity": Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather. Race, gender and sexuality in the colonial context* (New York, Londres: Routledge, 1995), 40.

54. T. Ranger has underlined the specificities of colonial Africa's new ruling traditions, justified by the necessities of racial domination: Terence Ranger, "L'Invention de la tradition en Afrique à l'époque coloniale," in *L'Invention de la tradition*, by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Paris: Amsterdam Éditions, 2006), 225–278.

public schoolboys, for instance, had been predominant in the formation of Kenya's colonial gentility, made much more of sporting achievements than intellectual prowess. Clubs and the mastery of exercise thus comprised the bulk of Kenya's elite culture and distinction.

After Independence, such practices continued to play this role for Africans. They appropriated an elite culture which had become a feature of state formation in Kenya. Josiah Mwangi Kariuki, who had been jailed for seven years for supporting the Mau Mau, became a successful farmer and businessman after Independence; he also joined politics and became a MP. One of the first Africans to join the Jockey Club and Muthaiga Country Club, he gave in 1966 an interview to the *Daily Nation*, the country's main newspaper:

> QUESTION: You yourself have gone from extreme hardship to considerable material comfort in ten years. I think it is correct to say that today you are a genuine, all-out African capitalist. You own 1,000 acres of land. You keep race-horses, you are a member of the Jockey Club, the Muthaiga Club, you publish a newspaper. Do you think all this is justified because you had sacrificed a lot of your life ?
>
> ANSWER: On the contrary, I am trying to show many people in this country who were torturing me – who thought I would get lost, with nothing on my own. In fact I work day and night. I have a lot of responsibilities, as a Director of Allsopp's East African Breweries…I organized my own bookshop. I take the initiative to show other people that even if somebody is detained he can come out and overtake other people – do even better than they did. […] As you know I am not one of the *international drinkers…* So I kept this money and that's how I managed. You talk about the horse. True, I am the first African to own one. But I feel I must show this community of Europeans who had set themselves apart that we can live together, and we can share the idea of horse-racing together. In fact, when I am with people like Lord Delamere and Sir Ferdinand and Sir Charles Markham, I feel quite happy. We exchange ideas. And, in fact, I want to prove to them that there is no bitterness in me – or even in many other people who were detained. I like this, I enjoy this. In fact, what is needed in this country is honest people, who do not go behind the backs of other and say "we have to please them for some time, then leave them" – no, I want to prove that I am one of them.[55]

Kariuki's attitude was ambiguous, using the former attributes of settler' domination to prove he was their equal. It served as a response to the humiliation felt during the colonial era by many Africans before those exclusive racial places, deeply intertwined with power and domination. Like the White Highlands, clubs symbolized the colour bar, the informal and diffuse apparatus of racial exclusion.

The literature has considered that for many African societies colonialism was a trauma

55. "From freedom fighter to businessman", *Sunday Nation*, 6/11/1966, p.37, reproduced in: Cherry Gertzel, Maure Goldschmidt, and Donald Rothchild, *Government and Politics in Kenya. A Nation Building Text* (East African Publishing House, 1969), 78.

which deeply affected, if not destroyed, pre-existing conceptions of honour and dignity.[56] Resentment toward colonial injustice and the search for dignity fuelled nationalist movements.[57] African representations of clubs and golf was shaped by such context. The first African golfers carried a collective honour; they marked the equal dignity of their Black peers. Beating European golfers, African caddies became national heroes. The story of Gerhas Khakali illustrates this reversal. Born in 1948, Khakali's father was a *shamba boy* on a European farm. While at primary school, he went to the Kitale Club course, to propose his services as a caddie. He soon took interest in the game, and accompanied one of the club's best golfers, a Catholic priest named Mike Kelly, who gave him a set of wooden clubs with which to train. After Independence, the club proposed that its caddies play every Monday, when the course was empty. Khakali came regularly, and reeived the offer of becoming assistant barman at the club and then its storekeeper and assistant accountant. He played his first caddies tournaments at the end of the 1960s. A gifted golfer, the club proposed that he play in some amateur competitions. He won almost all the tournaments in the region, and then in the country: he was five times the Transnzoia champion, won the Plateau tournament in Eldoret, the Rift Valley tournament in Nakuru, the Tea Fields in Kericho, the Karen Day, the Uhuru Shield at Royal, when golf was still predominantly a European sport.

Khakali's prowess reached the ears of African leaders such as Duncan Ndegwa – the Governor of the Central Bank – and Richard Kemoli – a director at the Commonwealth Development Corporation – who paid for his tournaments and golf attire. In 1978, Ruben Chesire, the then chairman of the Kenya Farmers Association, offered him a job in his Kitale office. Gerhas was called to the Kenya golf team, along with people like John Mucheru, Lawrence Kariuki, Ben Okello, all trained by Richard Kemoli. The height of his golfing career came in 1982:

GERHAS KHAKALI: The most memorable time in my golf career is when I won the Kenya Amateur Matchplay, in 1982, at Nyali Golf Club. This is a knock-out competition, and we started playing it on Wednesday. I got through the finals, on Sunday, and I played against one of the best golfers, David Farrar, from Muthaiga. And I beat David Farrar in the finals, after playing thirty six holes. It is one of the days that will never get out of my memory. Because it was really good feeling. And Africans had just started showing the world and the country that we could also play golf. So it is one of the memorable time that I remember.

D.C.: Was it important because you beat a *mzungu* ?

56. The "honour crisis" mentioned in: Boubakar Ly, "L'honneur dans les sociétés ouolof et toucouleur du Sénégal," *Présence Africaine* (61 1961): 32–67; *quoted in* : John Iliffe, *Honour in African History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 6.

57. See: Iliffe, *Honour in African History*, 306-308; On Kenya: Atieno-Odhiambo, "The Formative Years. 1945-55," 32-33.

G.K.: First and foremost, I must say, David Farar was a sportsman. He hailed me, and before we started playing against each other, he said : "Gerhas, you are a good man, you are good hearted, may the best person win". And at the end of the day I beat him, and he didn't show any anger that he lost. To me, I also felt good, but it was even more that I had beaten a *mzungu* in the finals. Which of course most of our fellow Africans, they were for it, that I should beat the *mzungu*. I got so many gifts from my fellow Africans, people like Duncan Ndegwa. Duncan Ndegwa was one man who, going the the finals said : "you must not be beaten by a *mzungu*". Richard Kemoli came and said : "Gerhas, this is our country, you must beat, you must win", yes. At that time, *mzungus*, they still held a lot in every sector, including golf, so it was something that I live to remember.[58]

Following his victory, Gerhas Khakali, former caddy, was elected honorary member of the Kitale Club. African entries into European clubs were often experienced as a revenge for the humiliations of the colonial past.

Another caddie, Lawrence Nginyo Kariuki did much to foster African engagement with golf. Born in Kiambu in 1938, Kariuki earned his fortune in several short-lived, unevenly profitable businesses. A petty entrepreneur, he sold dung, road gravel, built latrines, traded to Asian shopkeepers, sold lockers and oil, and was also a caddie at the Kiambu Club. In 1960, he became the first professional African golfer, launching in the same year a liquor import company. In the early 1970s, a European doctor leaving Kenya whom he had met at the club sold him the 140 acres of his tea estate; he then borrowed money to buy 1 000 acres in Makuyu where he grew coffee[59]. In 1961, he built a golf course in Ndumberi, next to Kiambu, a dozen kilometres north of Nairobi. It was partly established on a football field – where matches continued to be played on weekends – which also served as a livestock grazing area. Local residents ironically nicknamed the field St Andrews.[60] The greens of Ndumberi welcomed a group of senior civil servants and Kikuyu heads of private sector companies. They created the Tubogo Golf Club, dubbed after the name colloquially given to young elephants. Among them were Duncan Ndegwa, his brother Philip, John Michuki, Peter Kinyanjui, Solomon Karanja, all graduates of overseas universities, Alliance or Mang'u Old Boys, who already held senior positions in Kenya's public and private sectors.[61] They were trained by Kiambu Club caddies, led by Lawrence Kariuki. Tubogo wished to show that Africans were as able as Europeans to play golf, and ultimately aimed to enter the club of the latter. Duncan Ndegwa, who had learnt golf when he studied at in St Andrews writes that Ndumberi was as much a golf school as an apprenticeship of clubs rules and etiquette:

58. Interview with Gerhas Khakali, 13/10/2012.

59. "How I Built My Business Empire", *The East African Standard*, 2/09/2002 ; Ndegwa, *Walking in Kenyatta Struggles. My Story*, 515.

60. Quick, Quick, and Burdick, *Rhinos in the Rough. A Golfer's Guide to Kenya*, 116-117.

61. Cf. table below.

> Ndumberi Club and Course, about 5 acres of an abandoned emergency village football pitch was then the African Meccah of golf. With my companions we formed a golf club known as *Tubogo*, to facilitate access to various golf clubs. […] *Tubogo* included many senior Africans in government. […] By 1970 *Tubogo* was moving from success to success, the club extended its activities to arranging social gatherings at which women and children attended. Friends of members came too to share in *nyama choma*[62] and booze. The Shell Club at Karuri Forest became a popular rendez-vous for such parties. Under the leadership of a Shell member, Mr G. Gichuki, an investigation was made of acquiring some of the adjoining land to build a golf club and course. By that time most European clubs began to admit applicants supported by *Tubogo*. An additional club seemed superfluous and the idea was quietly abandoned. […] A shrewd observer would have at these times noticed a shift in discussions that inevitably follow a golf game at hole number 19. Instead of discussing golf competencies, *Tubogo* were talking about etiquette, courtesies and rules. It was a swing towards history and the origin of golf, towards the Royal & Ancient to my *alma mater* – St Andrews. The record cards were carefully scrutinised for mistakes.[63]

For this generation of African leaders, Tubogo was an antechamber to European's clubs. Yet the African practice of golf, despite its taste for etiquette and traditions, was different than the European. Its informal sociability was organized around a roasted goat – the traditional Kikuyu meal – and local language and humour. With "heroes" like Kariuki, Mucheru, or Muonjoria in Nyeri, it carried the recovery of Kikuyu's dignity as regards to the humiliations of colonialism[6465]. This apparent contradiction – affirming African dignity through a British sporting practice – was reflected in the use these elites made of clubs.

V. The Imperfect Reflection of Education and Profession

The first generation of African golfers had much in common. They were typical of the elite which came to power at Independence. They were the inheritors of colonial chiefs and missionary priests, less often of pre-colonial status of authority.[66] Samuel N. and George K. Waruhiu were the sons of Chief Waruhiu wa Kungu, killed in 1952 by the

62. A roasted goat.

63. Ndegwa, *Walking in Kenyatta Struggles. My Story*, 518-520.

64. Much more than the Nubians of Kibera Golf Club, always suspect, as Muslims, not to be "real" Kenyans.

65. Ndegwa, *Walking in Kenyatta Struggles. My Story*, 515-516.

66. On the proportion of sons of chiefs among Alliance High School and Makerere first graduates has been documented in: Kipkorir, "The Inheritors and Sucessors: The Traditional Background to the Modern Kenyan African Elite: Kenya c. 1890-1930"; and J. E. Goldthorpe, "An African Elite: A Sample Survey of Fifty-Two Former Students of Makerere College in East Africa," *The British Journal of Sociology* 6, no. 1 (March 1955): 31–47.

Mau Mau; Paul Ngei, John Michuki, and George Muhoho were also sons of chiefs, the latter Kenyatta's brother-in-law; Richard Kemoli's father was a Maragoli elder, Mzee Musa Yida; Sam Muumbi's father was a priest at the American African Inland Mission. Most were Kikuyu, due to the proximity of this group to Nairobi, and more exposure to missions and education.[67]

Education played a great role in the socialization of these figures, and in the social practices they adopted in their later years. Duncan Ndegwa's enumeration of the "First crop of African golfers" is edifying, when linked to school and university backgrounds. The number of Alliance and Mang'u alumni is remarkably high, as is the proportion of those who attended an overseas university. In Alliance, as in Mang'u, academic standards were extremely high: Alliance students often beat their European counterparts at the Cambridge School Certificate Examination O-Level that they took in common. In these institutions shaped along the British boarding school model, social life involved a set of extra-curricular activities which prepared men for their future duties. Sports had indeed a great importance, especially athleticism, along with hockey, volleyball, or optionally, tennis, badminton and boxing.[68] In those activities, Alliance students surpassed the Europeans of the Prince of Wales School in running from the mid-1940s on.[69] Alliance's social life also involved scouting, debating clubs and theatre; Shakespeare was particularly played and studied.[70] Religious life was also important and the Sunday service was followed by all, Alliance being a Protestant school while Mang'u was Catholic. High school social life, sports in particular, was later pursued in universities as such as Fort Hare or Makerere. The latter had a very popular tennis court, and matches were organized against the neighbouring Kampala Sports Club. As in many British universities, meals were taken in halls, around which the social life was organized.[71]

Yet, academic life in these institutions was complex. While shaped along the homosocial experience of British boarding school, it was never identical to it. It was also filled with the hierarchies and contradictions of the colonial situation. Paternalistic ties between students and teachers were common, especially with Carey Francis, Alliance's headmaster from 1948 to 1962.[72] Benjamin Kipkorir later wrote that Alliance raised him

67. On the origins of the over-representation of Kikuyu among Kenya's postcolonial elites see: Leonard, *African Successes. Four Public Managers of Kenyan Rural Development*, 87-89.

68. Benjamin E. Kipkorir, *Descent From Cherang'any Hills. Memoirs of a Reluctant Academic* (Nairobi: Macmillan Kenya, 2009), 130; Ndegwa, *Walking in Kenyatta Struggles. My Story*, 113.

69. Stephen J. Smith, *The History of the Alliance High School* (Nairobi: Heinemann Educational Books, 1973), 152.

70. Kipkorir, "The Alliance High School and the Making of the Kenya African Elite. 1926-1962," 156; Kipkorir, *Descent From Cherang'any Hills. Memoirs of a Reluctant Academic*, 130-131; Smith, *The History of the Alliance High School*, 130,136,183.

71. Margaret MacPherson, *They Built For the Future. A Chronicle of Makerere University College, 1922-1962* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964), 19, 191-2; David Mills, "Life on the Hill: Students and the Social History of Makerere," *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute* 76, no. 2 (2006): 247–266.

72. On Carey Francis see: Ndegwa, *Walking in Kenyatta Struggles. My Story*, 107-130; and: Benjamin

to dignity, not as a native but as an African.[73] There, Ndegwa became aware of what being colonized meant: Alliance was an Eton, without Etonian's privileges.[74] When they left school, status differences remained blatant between European ans Africans, despite the latter's excellence. Up to the 1950s, former Alliance students remained confined to subaltern positions in the colonial administration – junior clerks, school teachers – and permission to study in foreign universities was granted only to a very limited number of Africans.[75]

Yet it is through these institutions that African students found themselves surpassing Europeans. They afforded them access to elite traditions and forms of respectability, all inspired by British ones, but which gave them the opportunity to appropriate colonialism, and to criticize and contest it. Schools provided Africans with the knowledge and title by which they could claim authority and power, not only over their tribe but over the whole country; their traditions constituted a pluri-ethnic culture of domination and responsibility, a new language to reach the state and serve their peers and their kins. Education promised Africans the possibility of overcoming their condition, while for Europeans it only reproduced the cultural attitudes by which they legitimized their status.

Alliance and Mang'u alumni often became interested in European clubs and their practices; an Alliance Old Boys had even been created in 1940, gathering more than half of its former pupils.[76] Yet educated Africans were not fully adjusted to the European clubland. White's clubs carried a racialized style of domination in their walls and practices; a set of unconscious tastes, unsought postures and attitudes, aesthetics and affects whose effect was to put non-Europeans at a distance. As regards to a sociability rooted in drinking, dances, and a certain type of physical exercise, African bodies were shaped by a different history. In terms of practices, differences remained between African and European schools. Sports were different; cricket and rugby – the latter a contact sport – were not practised in Alliance of Mang'u. By contrast, the Prince of Wales School had, for instance, a golf club which played at the Karen Country Club. Its students only played those of Alliance and the Government Indian High School – Duke of Gloucester from 1955 – in an athletic tournament, which was named the Triangular Meeting. Races were opposed, as was the case for cricket in India, during the Pentagular tournament.

E. Kipkorir, "Carey Francis at the Alliance High School, Kikuyu, 1940-62," in *Biographical Essays on Imperialism and Collaboration in Colonial Kenya*, ed. Benjamin E. Kipkorir (Nairobi: Kenya Literature Bureau, 1980), 112–159.

73. Kipkorir, *Descent From Cherang'any Hills. Memoirs of a Reluctant Academic*, 128.

74. Ndegwa, *Walking in Kenyatta Struggles. My Story*, 112, 121.

75. On African access to higher education in colonial Kenya see: Hélène Charton, "La genèse ambiguë de l'élite kényane : Origines, formations et intégration de 1945 à l'indépendance" (Thèse de Doctorat sous la direction de Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch, Université Paris 7, 2002).

76. It was closed soon after, when Carey Francis opposed it and the alumni who wanted to take a greater part in the school's management: Kipkorir, "The Alliance High School and the Making of the Kenya African Elite. 1926-1962," 238-242; Benjamin E. Kipkorir, *Biographical essays on imperialism and collaboration in colonial Kenya* (Nairobi: Kenya Literature Bureau, 1980), 141-142.

This sort of competition entailed that athletes be first assigned to a race that it reified and naturalized.

African schools offered a Spartan diet that did not suit the students' customs. As such, strikes occurred.[77] The study and production of Shakespeare was somewhat anachronistic as regards to the contemporary comedies of Ian Hay – *Tilly of Bloomsbury* – George Bernard Shaw – *Arms and the Man* – or Stanley Houghton's dramas played in European schools at the same time.[78] The Prince of Wales and Alliance students did not laugh at the same things. The African school transported the humour and satire of theatre on the allegoric stages of a distant past. Shakespeare then had little to do with Gilbert & Sullivan comic operas, which mocked social conventions that so many Europeans were fond of. Rugby, also, bridged European schools and clubs. Old Boys Associations institutionalized themselves as Nairobi-based, multi-sports clubs with a strong rugby section. Former students of Prince of Wales then played at the Old Cambrian Club – later the Impala – while Duke of York, later St Mary's – a Catholic private school – rather joined Nondescripts or Harlequins. As such, no easy link existed between African school practices and the world of European clubs.

Moreover, the ruling traditions that the missions and the African elite schools promoted were ambivalent. Their disciplinary rituals referred to subordination and deference, to qualities which aimed at making Africans highly skilled servants, the upper echelon of colonial auxiliaries. Less often did they prepare their students to become their country's rulers.[79] If it was allowed for these students to be the firsts, it was only among their African peers.

African entry into clubs was closely related to the Africanization of the administration and the professions. Again, this did not proceed without complication and the relationship between both phenomena was never automatic or unconditional. Indeed after Independence, Europeans had no grasp on the country's political institutions. Yet, they had long kept a strong hand on the administration, the professions and the private sectors. In 1963, only 19% of senior administrative positions were occupied by Africans. Kenyatta's government addressed the issue a few years later, fostering the fast promotion of young African graduates.[80] Africanization was slower in the professions and in the private sector. At Independence, public hospitals only employed 46 African doctors and none in

77. On Alliance see: Kipkorir, *Biographical essays on imperialism and collaboration in colonial Kenya*, 128; This sometimes happened at university, too. For Makerere University see: Mills, "Life on the Hill: Students and the Social History of Makerere."

78. For an insight on European schools' theatre performances, see *The Impala, The Magazine of the Prince of Wales School, Kenya*, re-edited in 2002 as a CD-ROM: *Old Cambrian Society : The Impala 1933-2002*. I thank Wachira Kariuki, from the Old Cambrian Society who took charge of the project, to have found me one.

79. This contradiction has especially been shown by Ranger in the paragraphs he dedicates to King's College Budo, in Ouganda : Ranger, "L'Invention de la tradition en Afrique à l'époque coloniale," 236-238.

80. Charles Hornsby, *Kenya. A History Since Independance* (Londres, New York: I. B. Tauris, 2012), 123-125.

The First Generation of African Golfers (late 1960s)				
		Birth date	Native Province	Secondary Education
1	Paul Ngei	1923	East (Kamba)	Alliance High School
2	Duncan Ndegwa	1925	Central (Kikuyu)	Alliance High School
3	Njoroge Mungai	1926	Central (Kikuyu)	Alliance High School
4	Samuel N. Waruhiu	1927	Central (Kikuyu)	Mang'u High School
5	G.W. Gichuki	1931	Central (Kikuyu)	Alliance High School
6	Mwai Kibaki	1931	Central (Kikuyu)	Mang'u High School
7	Josephat Karanja	1931	Central (Kikuyu)	
8	John Michuki	1932	Central (Kikuyu)	Mang'u High School
9	Nick Mugwandia	1933	Central (Kikuyu)	
10	James K. Gitau	1934 (?)	Central (Kikuyu)	Alliance High School
11	Peter K. Kinyanjui wa Kibibi	1934	Central (Kikuyu)	Alliance High School
12	Richard Kemoli	1935	Western (Luhya)	
13	George Muhoho	1936	Central (Kikuyu)	Mang'u High School
14	Solomon Karanja	1936	Central (Kikuyu)	Mang'u High School
15	Philip Ndegwa	1937	Central (Kikuyu)	Alliance High School
16	Joe B. Wanjui	1939	Central (Kikuyu)	Mang'u High School
17	Sam Muumbi	1940	Eastern (Kamba)	Machakos
18	George K. Waruhiu	1941	Central (Kikuyu)	
19	Chris Kirubi	1942	Central (Kikuyu)	
20	Paul Muite	1945	Central (Kikuyu)	Thika High School

	Higher Education	Profession
1	Makerere (Uganda)	Ministry of Development and Cooperatives
2	Makerere, St Andrews (Scotland)	Governor, Central Bank of Kenya
3	Fort Hare (South Africa), Stanford (CA, USA)	Ministry of Defence
4	Makerere, University College Wales (Aberystwyth)	Lawyer
5	Makerere	Shell East Africa
6	Makerere , London School of Economics	Ministry of Finance
7	New Delhi, Princeton (NJ, USA)	Vice-Chancellor, University of Nairobi
8	Oxford	Director, Kenya Commercial Bank
9	Makerere	Director, Shell
10	Makerere , London	Director, Kenya National Trading Corporation
11	Makerere	Kenya Ports and Harbours Authority
12	Makerere	Director, Commonwealth Development Corporation
13	Collegio St Pietro, Rome (seminary)	United Nations Environment Program
14	Makerere, London	Director, Portland Cement
15	Makerere, Harvard (MA, USA)	UNEP
16	Ohio Wesleyan (OH), Columbia (NJ, USA)	Director, East Africa Industries
17	London	Standard Bank
18	Dartmouth College (NH, USA), Cambridge	Lawyer
19	Institut Supérieur Européen d'Administration des Affaires (INSEAD, France)	Cooper Motors
20	London	Lawyer

Table 7: Table elaborated from an extract of the list given by D. Ndewga Duncan N. Ndegwa, *Walking in Kenyatta Struggles. My Story* (Nairobi: Kenya Leadership Institute, 2006), 595-598 completed by a biographical research in the *Weekly Review* as well as books and directories, especially Marco Surveys, *Who's Who in East Africa, 1963-1964* (Nairobi, 1965)

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private practice, two thirds of which were Asians. Similarly, law remained predominantly a European preserve until the mid-1970s; the first African president of the Law Society of Kenya was only elected in 1970.[81]In 1967, 95% of architects, 94% of pharmacists, 71% of academics, 86% of dentists and 67% of accountants and statisticians were not Kenyan citizens.[82] The independent government, which did not want to openly discriminate on a racial basis, had given non-Africans the opportunity to acquire a Kenyan citizenship, provided they would give up any other. The measure was not successful: only 15 000

81. John Iliffe, *East African Doctors. A History of the Modern Profession* (Kampala: Fountain Publishers, 2002 (1998)), 119-121.

82. Rothschild, *Racial Bargaining in Independant Kenya. A Study of Minorities and Decolonization*, 208-209 & 212.

expatriates accepted the offer, of more than 185 000 Asians and 42 000 Europeans.[83] For the authorities, the question of Africanization was never expressed in racial terms, but in terms of citizenship and loyalty to the new Kenyan state. It would have been hazardous for the new government to openly target non-African residents, who then controlled the bulk of the economy and held most of the professional, and almost all the higher administrative positions. It thus blamed non-citizens and expatriates' suspicion towards African leadership. Africanization was then a rather long process. Moreover, the general structure of the economy, the running of the state apparatus, the regime of private and land property as the organization of agriculture, remained more or less unchanged after Independence.[84] Elites' traditions related to the privileges of property, status, function or profession were maintained beyond the transition from White to Black leadership.

Beyond this apparent stability, the Asian position was more tenuous. African resentment towards them was high, rooted in the memory of brutal labour relations in the reserve *dukas* and towns of colonial Kenya. Moreover, Asians continued to control retail shops, and that apparent monopoly fuelled African aversion. The government's will to Africanize business engendered a set of restrictive laws: the 1967 Trade Licencing Act limited retail business to citizens. This was, in practice, anti-Asian legislation, which led to many evictions against both citizens and non-citizens.[85]

Yet these events seems to have strengthened Asian business and family ties, and, above all, the shift of the Asian economy from retail to manufacture and wholesale trade. In the 1970s and 1980s, more than 70% of Kenya's new factories were built and managed by Asians. Moreover, Africans were confronted with numerous economic issues, especially in terms of access to credit, which rendered difficult the replacement of Asian retailers. Several municipalities, facing a dramatic decrease of their tax revenues, asked for a suspension of the Africanization measures. Asian trade-unionism became stronger with those attacks, in particular, with the growth of the Kenya Association of Manufacturers.[86] Such solidarity was extended to the domestic sphere, in a country where the idea of miscegenation and mixed-marriage was considered unseemly at best.[87]

In the neighbouring Uganda, Idi Amin Dada forced Asians to leave the country. Many left for Kenya, settling for the most part in Kisumu and Nairobi. Kenya's Asians lived in

83. Rothschild, *Racial Bargaining in Independant Kenya. A Study of Minorities and Decolonization*, 188.

84. Daniel Branch and Nicholas Cheeseman, "The Politics of Control in Kenya: Understanding the Bureaucratic-executive State, 1952-78," *Review of African Political Economy* 33, no. 107 (March 2006): 11–31; Gary Wasserman, *Politics of Decolonization. Kenya Europeans and the Land Issue 1960-1965* (Cambridge, Londres, New York, Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 2008 [1976]), 151&164-175.

85. Nicola Swainson, *The Development of Corporate Capitalism in Kenya, 1918-1977* (Londres, Ibadan, Nairobi: Heinemann, 1977), 191-3; Paul Vandenberg, *The African-Asian Divide. Analyzing Institutions and Accumulation in Kenya* (New York, Oxford: Routledge, 2006), 117-120.

86. On Asian business after independence: David Himbara, *Kenyan Capitalists, the State, and Development* (Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 1994), 59-65.

87. Rothschild, *Racial Bargaining in Independant Kenya. A Study of Minorities and Decolonization*, 367-8.

fear of a similar fate. It was in this context that Asians increased investment in charities and service clubs, seeking respectability in a very uncertain context. The growth of Lions' clubs during the 1970s, of Rotary Clubs in the 1980s, with some of the richest Asian entrepreneurs heading them – Manu Chandaria, the Madhvanis, the Rattansis – owed much to these dynamics.

In the 1970s, the Ministry of Labour increased its pressure on Kenya-based businesses to replace their expatriate staff with local employees.[88] The former European settlers had remained extremely involved in Kenya's economy, mostly as company directors: Delamere, Blundell, Vasey were among the country's 50 most important managers, in terms of company directorships.[89] They responded to the government pressure by adopting Kenyan citizenship, but African leadership over private and para-statal sectors increased significantly. Kenya's first big businessmen appeared, at the crossroads between international capital and the State which organized, sector by sector, local monopolies on production and distribution:[90] Joe Wanjui, heading East African Industries – partly owned by Unilever; Solomon Karanja at Portland Cement; Richard Kemoli at the Commonwealth Development Corporation; Nick Muriuki Mugwandia at Shell East Africa; Hannington Awori with the Nation Media Group; Njenga Karume or Bethwell Gecaga at British American Tobacco. Europeans and Africans overlapping interests and directorships in most of the countries biggest companies. Asian businesses, by contrast, grew quite independent of these connections. In 1974, 72% of the country's most powerful businessmen were Kenyans, half of them of African origin.[91]

The separate development of Asian and Euro-African leadership on business and companies had some effect on clubs. It increased African co-optation in former European Clubs, and fuelled Asian exclusion and relegation. Thus, Nairobi's most prestigious clubs came to accept a few non-European members, despite the members' initial reluctance, and by the mid-1960s most institutions welcomed the "best" elements of other communities, provided their numbers remained limited.[92]

The surgeon and writer Yussuf K. Dawood was among the first non-European members of the Muthaiga Country Club. In one of his novels, *Eye Of The Storm*, the imaginary characters refer to personal memory the writer had of the clubs' Africanization. Dr Goldenberg, a surgeon in Kenya's finest hospital, invites a young African doctor, Joe

88. Swainson, *The Development of Corporate Capitalism in Kenya, 1918-1977*, 233-4.

89. Andrew Hake, who was then leading the *National Christian Council of Kenya*, published this list anonymously: National Christian Council of Kenya, *Who Controls Industry in Kenya ? Report of a Working Party* (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1968), 145-6.

90. On the cement industry – *Portland* and *Bamburi* – see : Swainson, *The Development of Corporate Capitalism in Kenya, 1918-1977*, 153-4.

91. Ibid.

92. D. Rotschild gives a couple of exemples – missing application forms, a staff reluctant to register the latter – which were added to usual procedures of exclusion: applications rejected by secret ballots, and compulsory proposers: Rothschild, *Racial Bargaining in Independant Kenya. A Study of Minorities and Decolonization*, 177.

Maina, to join the Club:

> DR. GOLDENBERG: Have you ever contemplated joining a social club like Muthaiga or Karen ? […] Muthaiga, as you might know, is the last outpost of the British in Kenya and they kept it white for as long as they could. But now they are bending over backward to recruit good, moderate Blacks like you. Mind you they still like to run the Club themselves and of course they run it very well, but they do want to shed the stigma of segregation. […] The number of *muhindis*[93] started growing in the Club register and alarmed the *mzungus*[94]. They did not really just want to appease the small minority, which in spite of a strong commercial and financial clout, has become politically irrelevant. The way they are shuffling from one sort of imbalance to another and probably jumping out of the frying pan into the fire. So naturally the Club started a quiet campaign to find the real sons of the soil and restore the balance in the correct proportion. […] They have been quite successfull in their pursuit and as a result, Muthaiga Club can now boast the best of both worlds, but also the cream of all the three communities.[95]

A growing administrative and professional status gave Africans the right of entry into most upcountry clubs, which needed members. In many institutions, the local DC along with the Police Commissioner, were honorary members and the first Africans to hold these positions became *de facto* the first to patronize the club. However, the relationships between whites and blacks remained unequal. The latter were much younger – most were about thirty years old – than the Europeans who co-opted them, and still very young regarding to the positions they held.[96] Africans co-optation by European members hence remained highly paternalistic.

Sam Muumbi's career in banking and on the golf course epitomizes the experience of many leaders of his generation. Born in 1940 in Machakos, his father served as a priest at the African Inland Mission. As the latter was in financial need, he refused to allow his son to join Makerere. Thus, Muumbi started a career in banking, beginning as a clerk for the Standard Bank of South Africa. He worked there for four years, before being sent to London for training, as Kenya's independence led the bank to foster its staff's Africanization. In 1966, Muumbi received a diploma in banking in London, returning to Kenya to work as a bank manager in Nyeri. He was then promoted director of the Kitui branch, in Ukambani, a hundred kilometres west of Machakos. Muumbi joined the Kitui Sports Club, abandoned by Europeans soon after Independence and restored and re-opened by local African administrators and teachers.[97] There, he played squash and

93. Indians in Kiswahili.

94. *Ibid.*, the Whites.

95. Yusuf K. Dawood, *Eye of the Storm* (Nairobi, Kampala, Dar es Salaam: East African Educational Publishers, 2010), 58-59.

96. C. Hornsby provides a meaningful table on this generation of African elites, who accessed the highest position at a very early age in the wake of independence: Hornsby, *Kenya. A History Since Independance*, 124-125.

97. KNA MV 1/6, Kitui Sports Club.

tennis. He was then posted to Machakos, where he married before leading the bank's Thika branch, in Central Province. It was in Machakos that he discovered golf:

> […] My boss the C.E.O., who was a Scotsman, came visiting my branch, and I took him to Machakos Sports Club for a drink, and this is where I got introduced myself to golf. He himself was a… Should I say he was a good golfer, how do I put it… he was very committed. I won't say he was addicted, but he liked golf so he asked me "Sir, what games do you play ?", and I said "I play squash and tennis", which is true, that's what I was playing, this was at the age of 31. But I had started the tennis when I went to Kitui, so he said :"No, no, these are not the games of a bank manager"! There was a golf course in Machakos, so I asked him "which are the games of bank managers"? He said :"Play with me to the golf course, unless you play golf there is no future for you in this institution". "Sure?" He said yes, and then he tried to explain to me : in golf you are likely to meet people who matter. In squash, yes, there are young guys and in squash you get your exercise and of course you meet people, but he was mostly saying that in golf you will meet the right people. And for sure I started golf in 1971, in Machakos.[98]

In the private sector, the Africanization of directorship and management positions intertwined professional and sporting co-optation. Golf was an essential part of the social life of economic elites, and the co-optation of young African managers by their European seniors was no exception. Sam Muumbi recalls how golf accompanied his professional advancement with the Standard Bank:

> And, for sure, then I joined… By then I joined the *Standard Chartered Bank* golf team, and I was the only black man in the team. So I joined them and we would go visiting branches, in other areas like Nakuru, Western Kenya, Mombasa over the weekends, with this group and we played golf in those areas. So my friend, the Chief Executive, remembered his promise that if I didn't play golf I will not advance. Within one and a half years, I was asked to join the headquarters as number three. So I was promoted, it was a big promotion. And this was at the age of 33. I joined the board, I was appointed to the board of the Bank. I was number three and between us there was an Englishman but this Englishman never played golf. So we were two golfers, and this guy didn't play golf so my boss would come, knock at my door. He used to play on Tuesdays his four balls, and say "Sam, what are you up to ?" when they missed one of their four balls. I'd say "I am just working", he will say "no, no, no"! And we would meet at Muthaiga Golf Club, and I joined their team.[99]

European professionals knew that inevitably Africans would take over most managerial positions. They wished to make sure that these would be men they trusted and with whom they could identify. Sometimes, co-opting Africans answered more explicit needs for a company. In Kericho, Elijah arap Chebelyon, the son of a Kipsigis elder who worked

98. Interview with Sam Muumbi, 21/08/2009.
99. Interview Sam Muumbi, 21/08/2009.

for the sales department of Brooke Bond plantation, was admitted to the local club in 1968, becoming six years later, its first African president. The plantation, one of Kericho's largest landowner, wished to gain the long-term support of the local authorities. It did its best to back Chebelyon, first sponsoring him to study in India, and then promoting him in the company and the club, as well as encouraging him to enter politics. In 1976, he became a municipal councellor in Kericho, and from 1988 to 1997, served as the Konoin MP.[100]

The increasing interdependence of young African and older European elites accelerated the former's entry in clubs, including the most prestigious, such as the Muthaiga and Karen. Sam Muumbi explains how he joined both the Muthaigas in 1973, under white patronage:

> By then, I joined Muthaiga Golf Club, which was purely golfing, and the Bank made sure I also joined Muthaiga Country Club, which is again one of the prestige social clubs, where I met a lot of people really who mattered, the old, say, European top class guys. I met various…celebrities… The names would not make much sense to you, one of them was Michael Blundell, there was Cavendish Bentinck, and all that… They were, you know, the top cream and I was the baby in the group because Njonjo was there, and others, a few Africans. We were just about less than fifteen of us. I remember, the Blacks, fifteen of us, but I was the youngest. So I found myself I didn't like most of the people, it was a bit snobbish, but I was young, I think I wasn't fitting right into it, but there were people that I would meet there who were good and so forth… My chairman then was the nationalized Tanzanian who was chairman of the Bank, and he was also a member there, so I would go for lunch and others and meet all kinds of people.[101]

In golf circles, the patronage of the Farrar brothers, Charles and David, whose father had been Muthaiga's secretary for 17 years, was crucial. Among Kenya's first golf professionals, they initiated many Africans into the sport, while preserving its local traditions, such as the Easter Tannahill Shield, the country's most prestigious amateur competition, played yearly since 1923. A similar case is that of Baronet Charles Markham, who after a political career at the LegCo converted the African elite to horse racing.[102]

VI. The Reinvention Of Race in Independent Kenya

The Africanization of clubs took a long time, and was far from a smooth process. The assumption of institutional leadership by Black chairmen especially shows this sort of conflict. This taking of the helm occasionally happened without a majority behind them.

100. Interview with Elijah arap Chebelyon, 9/10/2012.
101. Interview with Sam Muumbi, 21/08/2009.
102. Blundell, *A Love Affair With the Sun. A Memoir of Seventy Years in Kenya*, 124.

In Kakamega for instance, S.O. Josiah became the first African president by virtue of being the provincial commissioner in Western, as was customary for the holder of the function. In other clubs, Africans took control much later. In Thika, two Africans – the DC and the police commissioner – and two Asians – a doctor and a lawyer – had been elected members in 1962; ten years later, of the 150 members 40% were Africans and 60% were Asians.[103] Clubs faced a dilemma, torn between the necessity of opening their gates to other communities and keeping their prestige high, which hitherto had been based almost entirely on racial exclusivity. The opening of clubs thus led to many compromises and negotiations.

Among all institutions, the Karen Country Club might best illustrate this phenomenon. By the 1970s, it had only admitted a handful of excellent African golfers – less than 15 in 1973 – to avoid accusations of racial exclusivity. Yet in March 1977, after the Monthly Mug, a fire devastated the clubhouse, only leaving the billiard room intact:

> In retrospect, it may be fanciful – but not absurdely so – to see it as a form of exorcism. The year 1977 had started inauspiciously for the Club. Eric Folder, the Chairman, died before he assumed office. There were rumblings of discontents below the surface, emanating mainly from the younger Kenyan professional and businessmen joining the Club in increasing numbers, and hardly able to conceal their resentment of the fact that the running of the Club was almost exclusively in the hands of expatriates. Pressure developed to such an extent that the entire Committee, elected only the previous month, felt it incumbent upon them to resign *en bloc*.[104]

The fire allowed Africans to renegotiate the conditions of their membership. The club had to be rebuilt, as recalls a European member of the Committee:

> The great fire, there is no doubt about it that was a big turning point for the club after the fire. The club was only insured for £ 50,000 when it burnt down. And the new building costs £ 350,000, and the club design, they won't tell you that, it was actually a design for a game lodge, and it was given to us pretty much free. We had to do a lot of fund-raising, but we were not able to build it to the proper scale, with the net result that since then we have had to do alteration after alteration [...] I think the fire helped us, I think when we burnt down and we rebuilt, something special happened then and a lot of it is the younger Africans made it very clear that they were fed up of being kept out of the committees and after the fire certainly you found Kenyans on the golf committees, and the board and helping running their own club.[105]

This quote reveals the tensions and transformations at play in the membership. If Africans managed to secure some seats in the various committees, it was because they were alone in being able to raise the necessary funds for the new clubhouse to be built. European

103. Carl A. Dutto, *Nyeri Townsmen. Kenya* (1975), 58.
104. White and White, *Karen Country Club: The First Fifty Years*, 29.
105. Interview, Jackie Ayton, 7/11/2008.

members – citizens and expatriates – were on average much poorer than their African counterparts. In making considerable donations, men like the dentist Chris Obura, the businessman Richard Kemoli or the lawyer Eliud Njoroge made unavoidable their election as committee members. Sam Muumbi, discussing the rebuilding of the clubhouse, explains the consequences of this shift in terms of racial compromises:

> In 1977, as you might know the history of the Club, it burned down, and there was a lot of politics. We wanted to build a bigger club. But the Whites, who were the majority, wanted a replica of what had burnt down. So there were differences, and we were few Africans, very few, we didn't form even ten percent of the membership. So we stood our grounds, we brought in a bit of politics, we brought in Mwai Kibaki as a patron of the Club and we fund-raised, we said: "No, we put our foot down, we are going to build a club that will serve us for the next fifty years or so, we are not going to have the small little club as there was". So we divert with them and eventually it's the Africans who fund-raised the money and got the Club built. And then we came up with a non-written rule that [whispers] the Chairman of the Club will always be Black, after White. Why? Because we reasoned that and we said: "their interests are short-term. A lot of them were coming as expatriates, coming for two, three, four years, they didn't think about posterity but were short-term in terms of time that they would be there. So we disagreed and that's an unwritten rule we would not allow a White man to be chairman of the Karen Country Club for the time being. I don't know when it will change".[106]

From 1978 on, African chairmen replaced Europeans and succeeded one another: Chris Obura, the economist Philip Ndegwa, the banker Sam Muumbi. This new compromise between old and new elites was at the expense of the Asians. They were the intermediate group which catalysed all hatred, as whites could no longer afford to treat the new masters of the country as they had previously. The exclusion of Asians was further justified by their endogamous practices. Their economic and social exchanges had always been based on exclusive networks. The laws on the Africanization of businesses and commerce had increased their race and caste solidarities.[107] In clubs, Asians became everybody's foil: they were accused – always on cultural grounds: their behaviour, their food, their non-mixing habits – of corrupting clubs' spirit and reputation. Europeans and Africans thus agreed to keep them out of the Karen's premises:

SAM MUUMBI: [We]were very selective even here at Karen but not as much as Muthaiga although we ended up [whispers] discriminating against the Asians.
D.C.: For which reason ?

106. Interview with Sam Muumbi, 21/08/2009.
107. Gérard Prunier, *L'Ouganda et la question indienne (1896-1972)* (Paris: Éditions ERC, 1990), 71; François Grignon, "Le Débat kényan revisité," *Cahiers d'Études Africaines* 36 (143 1996): 501.

S.M.: Because that's the way I found it and when I was the Chairman we practised that. It is said and it is believed that a lot of them, because they don't support the Club financially, some of them would bring their own food to the Club, and they would want to take much from the Club rather than bring in and support the Club financially at least… And we were sighting the clubs like Royal. Royal Club should have been way ahead of the others because it was among the first ones that was set up; because of the way they were more exploiting the club facilities rather than enriching.[108]

Despite Asians and Europeans' agreement to share the club, the memory of colonialism, with its humiliations and injustices remained. This memory affected the relationships between the different communities. The lawyer Eliud Njoroge, one of Karen's first Black members, recalls that the exchanges between both groups were sometimes tense:

ELIUD NJOROGE: Of course you had the rude white man, who wanted always, you know, by behaviour, to show you he was the colonial boss before you got independence. You got those, they were always there, and are still there, some of them, even up to today. But you deal with them, you remind them from time to time, when you see one like that, they are less and less. But when they raise their hate, you tell them straight. I was among those who would tell them straight on the face, that who you are and whom I am, there is nothing you can change about it, that is what it is at the moment [laughs] And it has worked ! I have told off many times, I have told off…[109]

In many clubs, space was shared between the different communities who never really mixed. The Royal Nairobi Golf Club, for instance, had a squash court and pavilion next to the main clubhouse. The Asians drank at the former, while the Europeans continued to patronize the main bar. The assimilation of the two groups came later, under the increasing pressure of the new African members. The situation did not last long: by the mid-1980s, all Europeans but a handful had left the Royal for the Karen. In Nyahururu, the Thomson Falls Country Club knew a more radical fate when Africans took over. The election of its first Black Chairman in 1988, preceded a stormy AGM with Europeans as a group deciding to leave. Shortly thereafter, they removed the honour boards from the walls and moved the cups and trophies to the Njoro Country Club, 80 km south of Nyahururu. During the following decade, the 80 African members who remained raised funds toward razing the former clubhouse and building a new one.

Spatial segregation in clubs was also a matter of cultural difference. Its rules were always silent, and closely followed lines of social comfort. Long after their admission to former European clubs, African members continued to frequent the Tubogo to enjoy relaxed sociability. Sam Muumbi explains that by the end of the 1970s, African golfers

108. Interview with Sam Muumbi, 21/08/2009.
109. Interview with Eliud Njoroge, 29/01/2009.

gathered at the Ndumberi to roast goats, a practice which was strictly forbidden in their respective clubs:

SAM MUUMBI: [Tubogo] was more or less the… It was a group of African golfers. We formed, shall I say, it was a group within, we were members of various clubs, not necessarily one club, let's say Muthaiga, Railway Club… Not Railways, we didn't have many members there… It was of the top African, let's say golfers getting together, and because we would want to have social kind of evenings, or afternoons together, we would play golf, and we would *nyamachom*[110], we would have a barbecue, and so forth and drinks and that kind of thing. It was more sociable, then we could do our own, should I say African type of things, which might not be allowed, because in the clubs they did not allow us to barbecue our goats, in, let's say in Muthaiga Country Club or Muthaiga Golf Club or Karen Country Club, and we wanted to eat some meat! So Sigona was one of, the Sigona Club was one of those that at an early age accepted that we Africans, we could do that. In fact on Sundays, most of the Sundays we would meet there, and there would be barbecue after we played golf, and of course meet in the open, and what it would mean, they would know the numbers, and whether they would roast one goat or two, and we would chip in, there would be a fee that would be charged for participating, and that is the Tubogo and we would even make, let's say trips. Let's say if we wanted to go to Nyeri, there would be a tournament, and that was restricted only to ourselves. It wasn't open to everyone, so let's say the *mzungus*, or the Whites they would not be in that group. Yes. At least that's my recollection of what it used to be [laughs][111]

The same phenomenon was observed in many clubs. From the mid-1980s, Parklands was divided between two communities – Asians and Africans – who shared the club space but stayed apart, each with its own activities and sociability. The same happened in the Sigona. Nonetheless, it seems that in clubs' permanent reinvention of racial categories, Asian castes were diluted, while a strong community life, however, continued to exist outside the clubs.[112]

These compromises help to explain the progressive decline of squash, tennis and bowling, all whites' preserves, in many clubs following their opening to other races. African entry to European clubs also took several directions, which never completely replicated the homogeneity of colonial clubs. This led to the decline of several activities. Theatre almost disappeared after Independence, as did balls and dances. At the heart of matrimonial regulation and reproduction of white colonial society, dances typified what Europeans were not ready to share with African newcomers.[113]

110. Neologism, from *nyama choma*, i.e. roasted goat in Kiswahili.

111. Interview with Sam Muumbi, 21/08/2009.

112. Beyond personnal observations, my hypothesis is mostly based on D. Nelson's work on Goans: Donna Nelson, "Caste and Club: A Study of Goan Politics in Nairobi" (PhD diss., Université de Nairobi, 1971).

113. On West African clubs, see in particular: L. Proudfoot and H. S. Wilson, "The Clubs in Crisis: Race Relations in the New West Africa," *The American Journal of Sociology* 66, no. 4 (January 1961): 320.

The First Non-European Clubs Chairmen

Golf and Country Clubs

		Founded	*First Non-European Chairman*	*First African Chairman*
Nairobi and Central Province	Nyeri	1922	1969: A.T.D. Ghadialy	1978: A. Wamunyu
	Kiambu[a]	1913		
	Limuru	1926	1978: N. Ngang'a	1978: N. Ngang'a
	Sigona	1938	1974: S.N. Waruhiu	1974: S.N. Waruhiu
	Karen	1937	1977: C. Obura	1977: C. Obura
	Royal	1906	1976: Ch. Sehmi	1988: S.A. Kimemi
Rift Valley	Nakuru	1929	1978: R.D. Khagram	1981: I. Mwai
	Njoro	1921	1992: Dr. Obura	1992: Dr. Obura
	Nandi Bears	1928	1996: J.M. arap Langat	1996: J.M. arap Langat
	Kericho	1927	1974: arap Chebelyon	1974: arap Chebelyon
Nyanza	Nyanza	1915	1978: M.F. Shah	1985: D.N. Awori
Western	Kitale	1925	1976: E.J. Goes	1998: Dr. Rutto
	Kakamega[b]	1932	1967: S.O. Josiah	1967: S.O. Josiah

	First non-European Captain	*First African Captain*
Nyeri	1978: T. Sehmi	1979: J.N. Wambungu
Kiambu	1975: G.W. Gichuki	1975: G.W. Gichuki
Limuru	1980: S. Gitonga	1980: S. Gitonga
Sigona	1971: Opkar Singh Channa	1976: S. Karanja
Karen	2003: F. Lobo	1976: C. Obura
Royal	1975: Ch. Sehmi	1985: J. Onyang'o
Muthaiga	1979: P. Kariuki	1979: P. Kariuki
Nakuru	1975: D. Patel	1979: N. Kiuna
Njoro	1990: S.K. Njoroge	1990: S.K. Njoroge
Nandi Bears	1985: V.S. Osundwa	1985: V.S. Osundwa
Kericho	1980: R.N. Patel	1969: K.S. Munde
Nyanza	1968: A.G. Desai	1977: J.W. Okech
Kitale	1979: J. Kamau	1979: J. Kamau
Kakamega		

Social and Sports Clubs

			First non-European Chairman	*First African Chairman*
Nairobi	Nairobi Club	1901	1984: M.W.Warambo	1984: M.W.Warambo
	Parklands Sports Club	1906	1979: Y. Shretta	1982: P. Ndungu
	United Kenya Club	1946	1950: B. Gecaga	1950: B. Gecaga
Province	Mombasa Club	1896	1972: Amb. D. Kayanda	1972: Amb. D. Kayanda
	Eldoret Sports Club	1930	1982: T.K. Bore	1982: T.K. Bore

a. No honour boards for Chairmen.
b. Unavailable data.

Table 8: First non-European club chairmen. The data comes from the honour boards taken in the different clubs, which usually mentions, for every year, the elected chairman and captain.

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VII. The High Culture Of Kenyan Elites

Places of intimate sociability, the clubs were warped by contradiction. As an institution, they contributed to shaping a European identity first defined by race. For the new African elites, however, the clubs represented a cultural attribute of power, success and respectability, an idiom of the ruling classes that they refused to reject.

This paradox is best restored by parliamentary debates related to clubs. Less than two years after Independence, Gerishon Mbogoh, the MP for Embu North, Vincent arap Too from Kerio North and ST Omar from Mombasa questioned the then Attorney General, Charles Njonjo, who had been of of the first Africans to join Muthaiga Country Club:

MR. MBOGOH: asked the Attorney-General what the Government was doing to discourage formation of racial, tribal and any other sectional clubs, so as to encourage the free participation and unity of the different communities in this country.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (MR. NJONJO): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to reply. I am not aware that racial, tribal or sectional clubs are being formed at the present time. The Government has made it known to all club managers that clubs with discriminatory constitutions which bar membership solely on grounds of race, colour or creed are out of step with the times and, indeed with the Constitution. I have no evidence or information about clubs which are exclusively racial in character and practices.

MR. MBOGOH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, arising from that reply is the Attorney-General implying that if now I am a Muembu and I want to join the Luo Union and they refused to accept me, I can report to the Attorney General and then he can take steps ?

MR.NJONJO: Mr. Speaker, I do not think I am in a position to answer that question. The question, I think, should be directed to the Luo Union.[114]

For Mr Mbogoh, national unity required the abolition of all associations based on an essential, naturalized identity, race or tribe. The debate clarifies the confusion between the numerous tribal associations of independent Kenya – such as the Luo Union – and clubs, which were assumed to be of a similar nature, but organized in fact a solidarity of a different sort. The ambivalence lay in the fact that race, up to then, had been produced as a class distinction, whose refinement reflected the subordinate state of those who did not belong to it. Clubs had long been associated with that domination, yet they remained under black leadership. The debate carried on:

MR. OMAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, is the Attorney-General aware that some of the racial clubs have difficult qualifications for entrance, and that when one applies to become a member for such a racial club, his application has to be considered by the committee, and in many cases the Africans are not allowed to become members?

MR. NJONJO: Mr. Speaker, I think in fairness to all these clubs, it is important that when hon. Members ask questions here, instead of generalizing and making allegations, they should give specific names of clubs which are alleged to have discriminatory regulations.

114. *QUESTION NO.2130*, Formation of Non-Racial Clubs, 3/06/1965 *Kenya National Assembly Official Record (Hansard), 1 Ju.-30 juil.* (1965), 157-158.

MR. TOO: Mr. Speaker, Sir, is the Attorney-General aware of the allegation that the Soy Club's Constitution is one which does not accept Africans as members of the club ? The Soy Club is near Eldoret in Uasin Gishu.

M.NJONJO: I am not aware, Mr. Speaker, and I am satisfied that that club is open to every person who makes the necessary applications.

MR. MBOGOH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, is that an implication that the Attorney-General is satisfied with the way the private clubs and all the other racial bodies are run in Kenya, so that he can say he does not know of any club which exercises discrimination?

MR. NJONJO: Mr. Speaker, until I have evidence that there are clubs which are practising a colour bar as the hon. Member would like me to believe, I am satisfied that these clubs are running satisfactorily.[115]

Clubs remained out of reach because their admission criteria were indefinite. Moreover, their apparently private nature contradicted their real importance in public matters. The vagueness of their membership rules, enacted at the committees' discretion, did not allow for generalization: clubs remained beyond reproach, because they looked like an archipelago of single, discretionary places. Their links with colonial domination, and therefore their persistence after the end of British rule remained mysterious. Yet their survival had long been uncertain: Eliud Mahihu, a PC, requested the demolition of all clubs in the cities he served. In Embu and Meru, the golf courses were destroyed by the commissioner, to erase his predecessor's heritage, an official who had built them and was hated by the locals. In 1979, Duncan Ndegwa personally called upon Jomo Kenyatta to end such destructions for the Nyeri, Nyali and Mombasa golf clubs to be saved.[116]

A few years later, the topic of clubs returned to Parliament. They were attacked by MPs as an expatriates' stronghold, with non-citizens accused of stirring up plots behind their walls.

MR. KIVUITU: asked the Vice-President and Minister for Home Affairs to tell the House whether the activities of private clubs with a preponderance of foreigners as their members are keenly watched by Government to ensure that the national security is not jeopardized by them. […] Could [The Vice-President] tell the House how the Government watches the activities of exclusive private clubs which only cater for particular groups of either white or yellow or green people ?

MR. ARAP MOI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the advice I can give the Hon. Member, and other members of the public, is that more people should apply for membership of these clubs so that Africans can become the majority. That is the only way this can be achieved.

MRS. ONYANGO: Mr. Speaker, Sir, does the Vice-President and Minister for Home Affairs know that the membership fee is so high in these clubs and that with

115. *Question No.2130*, Formation of Non-Racial Clubs, 3/06/1965 *Kenya National Assembly Official Record (Hansard), 1 Ju.-30 juil.*, 157-158.

116. Ndegwa, *Walking in Kenyatta Struggles. My Story*, 522-523, 599.

the income of today many of our people cannot join these clubs, although many of them would like to join ?

MR. ARAP MOI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I quite agree with the gracious lady but the fact remains that any club, including the one which is near Machakos, can raise the membership fees and nobody can do anything about it so long as it is within the laws of this country.

MR. KIVUITU: Mr Speaker, Sir, noting that the Vice-President did not understand my question, I am referring to particular clubs, for example the St. Georges, where you cannot become a member. Now in such clubs which only cater for particular sections of a particular community and cannot accept any membership from other races, how does Government know what is going on there and that they are not sabotaging the security of our country through their activities ?

MR ARAP MOI: [...] Mr Speaker, Sir, in this country we have the New Akamba Union, commonly known as NAU. This union is not open to anybody else except the Kamba people. Similarly the East African Maragoli Association is only open to Maragoli people and no other tribe. We do have Gikuyu Embu and Meru Association commonly known as GEMA which is open to people who belong to that section of our community. Also there is the Luo Union Association which is open to members of that community and any other person can hang around outside their meetings but he cannot be allowed to attend such meetings.[117]

The MPs used the clubs to attack alleged non-citizens' plots against the country. Clubs were nonetheless backed by the few Africans who had been able to become a member. They argued that there was no difference between clubs and a cultural tribal association.[118] Yet up until then, cultural associations had been debating and negotiating the redistribution or resources between patrons and clients, the poor and the rich, the rights and obligations between the latter and the former.[119] To the contrary, clubs were related to a colonial regime where the leaders were not accountable. Race, a culture of political irresponsibility, was opposed to tribe, a culture of accountability. Both the MPs who attacked the clubs were aware of this crucial difference.

This criticism was all the more blatant during a parliamentary session when Masinde Muliro, the then Minister for Cooperatives and Social Services, defended those institutions that only a handful of Kenyans could afford:

MR. ARARU[120]: asked the Minister for Co-operatives and Social Services if he would tell the House the size of membership of the Nairobi Club, Nairobi Royal Club,

117. *ORAL ANSWER TO QUESTIONS*, 27 June 1972, *Question No. 416*, Clubs and National Security *Kenya National Assembly Official Record (Hansard), 13 Juin-28 Juillet* (1972), 409-410.

118. Here, Moi directly attacked two MPs, Samuel Kivuitu, from Parklands, a Kamba from Machakos, and the Luo Grace Onyango, the first woman MP, representing Kisumu, who was among the Luo Union leaders.

119. See on Luo Union in idependent Kenya: Carotenuto, "Riwruok E Teko: Cultivating Identity in Colonial and Postcolonial Kenya"; annd on the Gikuyu Embu Meru Association (GEMA): Hornsby, *Kenya. A History Since Independance*, 271.

Impala and Aero Club in Nairobi Wilson Airport.

THE MINISTER FOR CO-OPERATIVES AND SOCIAL SERVICES (MR. MULIRO): Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to reply. Nairobi Club has 3,691 members; Nairobi Royal Golf Club has 435 members; the Impala Club has 700 members and Aero Club of East Africa has 420 members. These clubs are open to all Kenyans, but can only become members of these clubs when they have been introduced and sponsored by existing members of these clubs.

MR. ARARU: Mr Speaker, Sir, arising from that reply, what is the membership fee of any of those clubs?

MR. MULIRO: Mr. Speaker, Sir, if the hon. Member wants to be a member of any of those clubs he should apply to the club and he will be told the amount of money he will pay as membership fee.

MR. Y. ALI: Arising from that answer, is the Minister aware that almost all these clubs mentioned here ask for a lot of money for membership with a view to preventing Africans from becoming members?

MR. MULIRO: Mr. Speaker, Sir, every club has its own rules and membership charges. If the hon. Member is interested in seeing that the membership fee of any of the clubs is reduced the best thing for him to do is to enrol in the club and when it comes to voting he will get many supporters to change the constitution so that the membership fee is lowered.[121]

The debates clarifies the vagueness of clubs' criteria of admission and of their segregating technologies. It made them hard to criticize. As independence made race an outdated criterion of legitimacy, clubs had deployed a set of strategies in order to preserve both their prestige and their social homogeneity. The formal rules of co-optation – introduction of new members by a proposer and a seconder; secret ballots elections – became increasingly important, as race could no longer be the sole criterion of "clubability". Clubs would admit a few Africans, in order to avoid the accusations of racism. Any attack against these institutions, then, would be nothing less than a denunciation of an elite to which the MPs belonged themselves:

MR. ARARU: Arising from the last part of the reply, where the Minister says that membership of these clubs is open to all Kenyans who must be sponsored by a member, why is it necessary to require a sponsor who is already a member of a club to which application for membership is made ? Personally, I tried to join one of these clubs but I did not get any sponsor.

MR. MULIRO: Mr. Speaker, all clubs, including the Muslim Club to which the hon. Member belongs, if he is already a member, requires that an applicant has to be sponsored by a member of the club.

MR.ARARU: Mr. Speaker, Sir, if that is the regulation, since the Minister knows that all these clubs used to belong to our former bosses, and it is difficult for an African to be admitted, where does he think we can get sponsors to help us join them ?

121. *QUESTION NO.738*, Membership of Nairobi Club, Impala Club, etc., 23/10/1973 *Kenya National Assembly Official Record (Hansard), 11 Sept.-24 Oct.* (1973), 1331-1332.

MR. MULIRO: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. Member is genuinely interested in becoming a member of any of these clubs he is the last person to find problems of sponsorship.

MR. Y. ALI: Arising from that reply, does the Minister not agree with the House that according to the figures of membership of these clubs which he has just given to the House very few of these people are Africans, and this implies there is racialism? Does the minister agree with the House that the constitutions of these clubs are different from other clubs like the Abaluhya or Luo football clubs ?

MR. MULIRO: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Member cannot claim to have the prerogative of knowing where there are Africans or where there are not. All I would like to tell him is that clubs have their own rules and regulations which the new entrants have to conform with. If our Africans do not want to conform with these rules and regulations then we may not have any in these clubs. However, I have already told hon. Members that all these clubs have African members.

MR. NTHENGE[122]: Can the Minister tell us, say in the Nairobi Club, the fraction of the African members? Secondly, what machinery does he have to ensure that some clubs do not take a very small number of Africans, just for the sake of showing, and refuse to admit all the others?

MR. MULIRO: Mr. Speaker, Sir, every club has its own regulations and members of a certain club are members of that particular club. Therefore, whether they are black, yellow, white, brown or pink is immaterial. Therefore, I am only inviting the hon. Member for Iveti South to become a member of my club which is Nairobi Club and I will be his sponsor.

MR. SPEAKER: Next Question, Mr. Y. Ali.[123]

Clubs perpetuation in independent Kenya followed the reinvention of elitism. What were formerly racial privileges had become ruling class attributes. In the same way, it was impossible to fight the remaining white minority, who still had an economic importance, as the new African elite had made its own the former's lifestyle and spaces. In 1981, seventeen years after Independence, Dr Kanyama, the MP for Meru South, tackled the Karen Country Club, an act which provoked the chamber's indignation:

DR. KANYAMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is now 17 years since we got our own Independance […] I think it is time when a foreigner in this country has to say that he is either equal to an African or he is not superior to an African. There is a certain stage, as far as I am concerned, where I would say that there is some discrimination applied. Let us face it and call a spade a spade. We have got clubs which we call members' clubs. I do not want to step on anybody's toes, I hope. We call them members' clubs and you can only go there if you are a member, or if you are introduced by a member. Now. If I formed my club today and said that it is only for members, and the only fellows to come there are Meru people, and they have to be introduced by Meru people to

123. *Question No.738*, Membership of Nairobi Club, Impala Club, etc., 23/10/1973 *Kenya National Assembly Official Record (Hansard), 11 Sept.-24 Oct.*, 1331-1332.

> come in, you would call me a tribalist. Now, what do you say of these clubs where I being an African, have to look for a European to introduce me there, and probably I am not going to get one European to get me into that club ? Why do you not term this racialism ?
>
> THE ASSISTANT MINISTER FOR LIVESTOCK DEVELOPMENT (MR. SHIKUKU): […] Can he tell us which clubs do this ?
>
> THE VICE-PRESIDENT AND MINISTER FOR FINANCE (MR KIBAKI): […] This is serious in the context of our free society. Can he mention a club which does that ?
>
> DR. KANYAMA: Mr Deputy Speaker, it was in 1977 when I was invited by a friend to go for a drink in a club known as – What was it called? It was in Karen but I do not remember its name now […] It was called Karen Club.
>
> HON. MEMBERS: Oh, no, no!
>
> DR. KANYAMA: Let me go ahead. After going there with my friend we were told that since we were not members, we were required to pay Sh. 4 for temporary membership. That was not the end of it. When we paid the money, we went into the club and stayed at a table for more than one hour before anybody could come and serve us? That was because our colour did not match that of the people who were inside.
>
> THE VICE-PRESIDENT AND MINISTER FOR FINANCE (MR. KIBAKI): On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Sir, I am sorry to insist on this matter, but it is very important. Now, the hon. Member is ruining his case. He has now made reference to Karen Club, and as you know many of us are members. We were members even during the year he is talking about, 1977. We know that the club is very free and open. It is a true Kenyan club where he can join freely –
>
> AN HON. MEMBER: Maybe, it is free for a certain class of people.
>
> THE VICE-PRESIDENT AND MINISTER FOR FINANCE (MR. KIBAKI): No, there is no question of class. Everybody can join. The hon. Member must not refer to Karen Club. Could he withdraw reference to Karen Club because he is now being blasphemous ? […][124]

Yet the fact that up to the early 1980s clubs were a matter worthy of parliamentary debate reveals that the order of life since colonial times had been broken up. No longer were clubs an unquestioned presence in Kenya.

African elites did not appropriate clubs and golf as mere revenge on the colonial past. Beyond independence, such appropriation also speaks to the perpetuation of certain patterns of elite self-legitimization, rooted in Kenya's state-formation. However, the Africanization of clubs was only partial, in at least two different ways. On the one hand, it generated strange places, incompletely occupied. A few aspects of the material legacy

124. *19 MARS 1981*, *Kenya National Assembly Official Record (Hansard), 10 mars-7 mai* (1981), 295-296.

of colonialism remained, as abandoned relics of a revolved past: some regimental crests at the Nairobi Club, the great buffalo in the middle of the Nairobi Club lounge, the hunting trophies at the Rift Valley Sports Club, the Royal portraits in Njoro, a piano in Kitale. On the other hand, not all Africans joined clubs. Their Africanization reflected school ethos, professional careers, sporting talents and a certain engagement in nationalist revenge. Some groups were more exposed than others: the vast majority of the first African members were Kikuyu, the tribe which was the most exposed to missionary education, and the closest to Nairobi. Furthermore, clubs reflected rather than produced state power: it is no accident that Kenyatta's tribe, which occupied most senior administrative and political positions after Independence, was the best represented ethnic group in most Nairobi clubs from the mid-1960s. Indeed Luo and Luhyas lawyers manned the Nairobi Club, but most Kisumu clubs were patronized by Asians. Kalenjins came much later, and only became a majority in the Rift Valley Clubs – Kitale, Eldoret, Nandi Hills – from the early 1980s on.

Many tensions remained. Clubs continued to reproduce colonial categories, in a paradoxical way. In the decades after independence, when no club could remain racially exclusive and these institutions were shared between different communities, clubs were powerless in diluting their own cultural particularities. Rather, the shared space of clubs emphasized these peculiarities, re-naturalizing race as a relevant category in contemporary Kenya. Furthermore, the relationships between tribes remained one of the major stakes in the formation of a common, national elite culture. It renewed the long-established tension between ethnic cultures of accountability and an uncontentious, elite culture of privacy and irresponsibility.

Conclusion

Ngugi wa Thiong'o's assessment that club perpetuation rested on the fact that the elites of independent Kenya were the *compradore* servants of their European masters, perpetuating the colonial domination by delegation, was too simple. Both their role in colonial Kenya and their perpetuation beyond British rule can not be reduced to the mere continuation of European domination overseas.

In colonial situations such as Kenya where migrants of European origins were an extreme minority, whiteness had to be strongly enunciated and marked as a privileged category. While much work has emphasized the role of state administrations in the production of colonial racism, Kenya's particularity was the unofficial character of racial discrimination. In the colony, the colour bar was never supported by a clear legislative apparatus. It was rather a silent rule enforced by European associations and various trade unions, as well as settlers communities, without official incentive from the colonial authorities. The latter actually acted with much improvisation and indecision, only responding to settler's activism in setting up racial barriers. Hence the difficulty encountered by the administration in lowering the bar in hotels, restaurants and clubs in the 1940s, as they faced the fierce opposition of professional hotel keepers associations. The colonial state in Kenya thus never showed a strong interest in regulating matters of domesticity, and was much less active with respect to such issues than were the informal regulations of settlers' rural communities.

Domination usually leaves those who rule unmarked, thanks to the privilege of being individually referenced and socially transparent, while dominated social categories are referred to according to metonymical stereotypes.[125]. A Sinha points out, the colonial situation, with a permanent marking of racial belongings, was an exception.[126] Clubs in colonial India, she writes, strongly contributed to producing and signalling the racial identity of the dominant group. In Kenya, too, clubs' formal, exclusive apparatus contributed to making colonial taxonomy a visible, naturalized and operative regime of classification. Facing a government which was reluctant to legally endorse settlers' privileges, clubs formed a strong apparatus of racial recognition and distinction. However, they were not

125. As Colette Guillaumin writes : "In fact, a natural characteristic (race, sex) being a legal category, intervenes in social relationships as a constraining and impelling trait. It inscribes the system of domination on the body of the individual, assigning to the individual his/her place as a dominated person: but it does not assign any place to the dominator'": Colette Guillaumin, "Race and Nature: The System of Marks. The Idea of a Natural Group and Social Relationships," *Feminist Issues* 8, no. 2 (1988): 40-41; See also: Dorlin, "Introduction: Vers une epistémologie des résistances," 13.

126. Sinha, "Britishness, Clubbability, and the Colonial Public Sphere: The Genealogy of an Imperial Institution in Colonial India," 503.

shaped by the contradictions of the civilizing mission, the tension between universal and segregative logics, as some scholars have suggested.[127] Clubs were indeed, in a way, Eurocentric, as undoubtedly marking, for many of their members and despite the reality of their sociability, the impassable epitome of British civilization brought overseas. But it would be dangerous to speculate about them being objects of "native desire and resentment". If Kenya was a colony where such tensions existed, it was only as a replication of India's racial issues. Only for Asian and European migrants, who struggled for dominance over land, resources and political representation, were clubs a site of tension between the allegedly impassable universality of British standards and the segregation of social institutions. Their competition shaped the dynamics of club formation in Kenya, and made these institutions quite different from what they were in Britain.

Besides their obvious role in operating racial segregation, Kenyan clubs institutionalized a more complex phenomenon. If clubs were civilizing, Eurocentric institutions, this was first of all for the benefits of Europeans themselves, at the cost of extremely exclusionary practices. As a whole, it implied the exclusion of the poorer whites, and the assimilation of others to elitist standards. The Afrikaners of the Uasin Gishu plateau never really fitted the British institution that dominated the Eldoret's sociability. Besides the poor, Jews were barred and Germans, too, during the two world wars, joined by Italians during the second. Despite governmental efforts to limit their presence, there were also quite a number whites of lesser status, "Scottish cattle traders, Italian mechanics, Irish garage owners" who were not welcomed in Nairobi's most prestigious clubs.[128]. All Europeans were not welcomed everywhere, and some were excluded from any membership at all. As such, European migrants experienced a wide range of treatment in the colony, and all too often accounts deny or soften the class structure of European society in Kenya.

Because not all settlers were public-schooled gentlemen or aristocrats, gentility only concerned the higher strata of white society, which monopolized the production of the definition of whiteness. In most cases only a few settlers could afford the cultural standards all aspired, and the production of prestige also implied debts. Furthermore, the assimilation to the cultural standards of a dominant race did not rule out class distinctions. In the cities, institutions, beyond racial belonging, marked status differences. Urban clublands so reflected the class structure of European society, and for outsiders exclusion based on profession, education and earnings may have been resented with as much bitterness as was racial prejudice. In the farming communities of rural Kenya where the richest settlers dominated, assimilation was achieved thanks to a growing bureaucratic apparatus, which smoothed settlers differences and regulated the expression of individual conflicts. Both in urban and rural Kenya, women had to raise their voices and wait before being considered

127. As Sinha's work on Indians clubs would, for instance, suggest: Sinha, "Britishness, Clubbability, and the Colonial Public Sphere: The Genealogy of an Imperial Institution in Colonial India," 490-2.
128. Elspeth Huxley, *Nine Faces of Kenya* (London: Colins Harvill, 1990), 104; cited in Jackson, "White Man's Country: Kenya Colony and the Making of a Myth," 345.

as members, even of subaltern status.

But in the production of racial solidarity, clubs were a paradoxical institution. They were first and foremost designed for leisure, self-enjoyment and privacy, and were perceived as such. They provided a comfortable space away from the daily constraints of race relations. Actually, as long as racial solidarity was respected, clubs were a rather permissive institution. They lessened the weight of the ascetic constraints of domination, of embodying an unwavering, respectable façade in the everyday life of race and labour relations: they provided a place of temporary slackening, offering avenues of individual gratification. There, one could be drunk and talk crudely, be unfaithful to her husband, talk about his debts or misery. The little dramas of colonial life were exposed, the matrimonial strategies put at play. That was the importance of privacy, applied to a leisure place.

This tension between external prestige and internal relaxation is perhaps no better demonstrated than with pictures. The few photographs we have of Kenyan colonial clubs are all taken outdoors, on specific occasions, most of them civic – a Royal visit, a Jubilee, an Empire Day, more rarely a sporting event –, showing them as a place of racial unity and celebration of the imperial project. Nothing is shown within, of drinking and parties, as constituting the individual privacy of their members, something the latter could not be held responsible for in the outside world. Leisure and sociability did not entirely pertain to the production of prestige.

What the history of clubs suggests therefore, is that the formation of lifestyles was not entirely produced by the moral economy in which social roles were enunciated. European cultural expressions did not only answer the necessity to rule the colonized.[129] A great part of white culture was also the non-purposive continuation of public-school and army ethoses, and can not be reduced to the mere expression of domination. This is why one of the greatest issues that European clubs faced was to regulate the contradictions between a racial ideology of European supremacy mostly promoted by an aristocratic elite, and the more mediocre, darker realities of settlers' daily existences.

The relative autonomy of culture as regards to political domination explains certain tensions which permeated club life. Clubs conveyed some patterns of respectability and prestige, some imaginations of self-achievement. They were nonetheless contradicted by the mediocrity of many settlers cultural practices, and by the everyday interactions between diverse members, made of one-upmanship, competition and rebukes. This generated bureaucratic growth, "rites of interaction", avoidances, and a multiplication of subspaces

129. Such double bias is particularly blatant when studying the formation of European colonial masculinities. See for instance: Krishnaswamy, *Effeminism. The Economy of Colonial Desire*, 6-7; To a lesser extent, see also the way Sinha conceptualizes the reciprocal production of the "manly Englishman" and the "effeminate Bengali" in colonial India Sinha, *Colonial Masculinity. The "Manly Englishman" and the "Effeminate Bengali" in the Late Nineteenth Century.*

and enclosures.[130] It is this particular style of social interaction, born of the tensions and contradictions of racial identity, which shaped the particular pattern of Kenya's white culture.

Beyond colonial rule, as Ngugi bitterly noted, African elites adopted some of the practical and institutional attributes of British gentility. That they did so because they have remained the "compradore" servants of British interests of which they consciously reproduced all customs is a moot point. Until the 1940s, at least, its seems that Africans did not care much about European or Asian clubs. For instance, when the multiracial United Kenya Club was formed in 1946, its founding members found it difficult to find many Africans to be co-opted. There were indeed a complex set of reasons for this, economic as well as political, among which the will not to be seen as "white man's toadies", in Eliud Mathu's words, was salient.[131] Moreover, clubs did not figure into Africans' own conceptions of honour and achievement, until at least the late forties. Such consideration brings attention to the issues caused by the concept of native "agency" only being a reaction, or a resistance, to European rule and occupation. It denies the historicity of African conceptions of sociability, leisure, self-achievement and masculinity, and the peculiar moral economy in which they were rooted. Until the Second World War, at least, club membership does not seem to have been a desirable achievement for Africans.

To the extent that it did become an achievement, it was because African elites eventually reached the standards of wealth and education enjoyed by European settlers and officials. But clubs' history also suggests that their Africanization also pertains to the perpetuation of an aesthetic of legitimate power that was peculiar to the formation of the Kenyan state. Since independence, this aesthetic, this style of domination has been continuously debated and transformed. Therefore, the actualization of clubs, as an attribute of the dominant classes, has only been partial. It has engendered strange places, incompletely occupied, where certain aspects of the material legacy of colonialism remain, as obsolete relics of a past gone by: the British regimental crests, the great bronze buffalo now stands in the middle of the Nairobi Club lounge, the hunting trophies at Eldoret Club, the Royal family portraits in Njoro, a piano in Kitale. African elites have developed a practice and a memory of these institutions that differ from what settlers valued, and which today have little to do with the cultural idioms of the colonial domination. The colonial legacy now proceeds as much from a selective use of the past, as from African imaginations of the future Once a game where white domination could be challenged by black triumphs, golf and its materiality nowadays refer to the rise of new types of elites, professionals and managers. In the fight for liberalizations and democracy of the late 1990s, the golf club of Mwai Kibaki bore the promise of modernity against the wooden

130. On rites of interaction I refer to: Erving Goffman, *Les rites d'interaction* (Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1974).
131. Roelker, *Mathu of Kenya. A Political Study*, 119.

nyayo stick of the Moi regime, the symbol of tribalism and nepotism. The appropriation of clubs and golf by the African elites does not merely imply a revenge over the colonial past, nor its automatic continuation. While playing golf, Kenyans have appropriated institutions that confer prestige and afford connections. The African elites of independent Kenya have copied settlers' culture in appearance only. They might well have continued the reproduction of social categories rooted in the colonial past, but these now respond to contemporary stakes and power struggles. Rather than serving foreign interests, they serve their own, while clubs, as before, still institutionalize the exclusion of the majority.

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